

# A SECULAR STATE FOR INDIA

THOUGHTS ON INDIA'S POLITICAL FUTURE

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TO  
CHANDRUDU  
IN TOKEN OF LIFE  
THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

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## PREFACE

Patriotism without a country is worse than slavery with one, and patriotism which is dominated by religion is useless tinsel. At a time of high expectation about our political and economic future, there can be only one attitude to the Established Church of the British Government in India, the Hindu *Devasthans* and the Muslim *Wakfs*. These are institutions of History, towards which the citizen of a State can only have reverent indifference.

The emergence of the Two Nation theory and the manner in which religion is being sought as the basic foundation of State in our midst, are factors of tremendous import to our future well-being, for they indicate the certainty with which India would disintegrate, in default of a conscious effort on our part to resist the theocratisation of our national politics.

In this book I have surveyed world history with reference to the political failure of religion as the foundation of any country's national polity, and I have been fortunate enough to obtain for first publication the last political testament of the late Maulana Mohamed Ali on joint electorates. I feel that we can have a secular organisation for the State, without detriment to the interest of the Muslims or other minorities in the land, and I feel confident that the preservation of religion as the equation between man and his Maker, and not as the yeast to mis-leaven the politics of the country, is a matter of paramount importance to us as a people still to gain our political liberties.

*A Secular State for India*, is the sequel to my other two books *India in World Politics* and *Nationalism and Self-Sufficiency*, and these three books must be taken as constituting a trilogy on India's religions, politics and economics.

LANKA SUNDARAM

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## BOOK I

### THE SWORD OF RELIGION

Patriotism without a country is worse than slavery with one, and patriotism which is dominated by religion is useless tinsel. At a time of high expectation about our political and economic future, there can only be one attitude to the established Church of the British Government in India, the Hindu *Devasthans* and the Muslim *Wakfs*. These are institutions of History, towards which the citizen of a State can only have reverent indifference. The divorcing of religion from politics and citizenship, though King Amanullah failed to achieve it in his time if the Ataturk ordained it successfully for Turkey, is a goal which every Indian patriot must strive for, whether it is a federation or a confederation that is to be established in this country. The "spiritualisation of politics" in terms of the enthronement of citizenship as the first article of faith for the individual and the State, and the preservation of religion as the citadel of relationship between man and his Maker, are such objectives of importance for the individual and the community, which the political failure of the Roman Catholic Church, the Holy Roman Empire, the Muslim *jihad*, Sankaracharya's spiritual campaign, and a host of other historical developments have demonstrated. The secularisation of the foundations of the State, in

terms of the Fundamental Rights Resolution of the Karachi Session of the Indian National Congress, coupled with the Fourteen Points of the All-India Muslim League, with the preservation of individual religion, language and culture, is the only guarantee of the survival of India as an integral State and polity, in which all communities with special interests are to have their appropriate weightage.

If I have one single duty in this country to discharge as a self-respecting individual, it is to secure the demise of theocracy and the dawn of a political State, which fits me and my fellow-countrymen to the task of discharging the rights of citizenship which are to endure the test of time. If the history of the world yields any lesson of a lasting character, it is that religion cannot be mixed up with politics, if religion is to survive and if politics is to preserve unto any people their just rights and to make them strong and self-respecting. I am not interested here in one of the latest statements of Mr. M. A. Jinnah, in which he said that democracy is not suited to the genius of the Indian people, apparently the Muslim community in this country, and that the only salvation for India is the organisation of a series of communal States (*i.e.* States based upon the principle of religion) with undefined and undefinable guarantees concerning their formation and survival. I concede the point that on October 14, 1944, Mr. Jinnah, for the first time in his *Pakistanite* career, told the *Daily Worker* of London that *Pakistan* is to be a democratic form of governance, as a prelude to his

renewed offensive against the community and the country, in the wake of the failure of his talks with Gandhiji. But I am not concerned with the possible future political and constitutional implications of *Pakistan*, if at all *Pakistan* is to come to us, which I believe will not be the case within my lifetime at least, even though Mr. Jinnah and his principal adherents have very cleverly, but with an ingenuity which will not stand the test of rational scrutiny, left undefined whether *Pakistan* will be democratic or authoritarian in the strict context of the medieval Islamic concepts of *millat*, *jihad* and *dar-ul-Islam*. I am definitely concerned here, however, with the essence of history as known to the people the world over, which only goes to show that religion had better be the cherished equation between man and his Maker and not be mixed up with politics, if politics, as I have said, is to ennoble a people and to preserve unto them as an inheritance the Mother Earth in the defined territories which goes to make up the world system. Four or five thousand years of the history of man have given us instances by the hundred, in which religion as a motive force for political organisation has been admitted to have come to grief. An examination in brief of the failure of this attempt of man to furbish the sword of religion as the basic foundation of State, must necessarily take the form of an analysis of the British Established Church, the Hindu conceptions of statecraft and the Muslim approach to the organisation of society and politics, and is attempted below.

*Pax Romana* ruled in its time the rest of the

world with the sword of religion behind it. And *Pax Britannica* lauds the Christian ethic as the basic foundation of human civilization, which keeps in step with Christian Imperialism. The ESTABLISHED CHURCH one had crumbled into the dust, and was consigned to the womb of the past. The other is to meet its Calvary in the future, which I trust will not be beyond my time. Nurtured in the traditions of Anglo-Roman jurisprudence, as I am, even as hundreds and thousands of intellectuals and public men in this country are, there is only one lesson which history right through the ages can teach us all, as represented by slavery, disintegration, and freedom. An examination must be made here of the manner in which the Roman Catholic Church got mixed up with the State, in a futile attempt to sustain politics with the sword of religion.

From the ministrations of St. Paul, to the abolition, or rather the disappearance, of the Holy Roman Empire, was one long, chequered strip of world history, in which the sword of religion not only protected the State, but also governed the laws of citizenship, in which the State failed to wean itself away from the Church. It is historically correct to say that denominational religion, supported by the trappings of institutionalism, had always, at any rate during the initial stages of the spread of religion, depended upon the sword for its propagation. Wodin and Thor of the Teutonic countries had been decapitated by the onward march of the sword behind the Roman Catholic Church, which

the Romans took with them in their Imperialistic exploits of the early centuries of the Christian era. It is also historically correct to say that the downward plunge of Romanism, despite the sustained conspiracy of Roman soldiers and the Catholic Church, as a consequence of the unqualified rejection by the Anglicans of the futility of the Papal idea, led to the emergence of the British Primate as the spiritual leader of the vast majority of Britons during five centuries.

What I am trying to establish here is the fact that despite the adherence to ritualistic forms concerning the King and the Crown, which are anachronisms surviving from the Middle Ages, British polity today is secular in the extreme, and has nothing to do with religion as such being the foundation and motive force of politics. The Anglican sacrament comes into the picture when the cry goes up in England from time to time, "The King is dead, long live the King", but the sword of the Church is not behind any slogan of this character which, on an impartial examination, only means a hoary ritualistic form which the average Briton cannot see his way to depart from. The Roman Catholic Church in England is not an insignificant body, though the Catholic Archbishop of Westminster has not the status and function which the British Primate has with reference to the State, but derives his power and position only from the Pope who lives secure in his Vatican in distant Rome. It is obvious that, even as against the current forms of Anglican tradition in Britain, there

are instances of Roman Catholics becoming Lords Chief Justice of the Realm and other high functionaries of the State, a thing which is unthinkable in any country where the State finds its basis in religion proper. If a *Caliphate* is again to become evangelical in favour of international Islam, it is unthinkable that a *Khoja* or *Shia* would either become its vicegerent or law interpreter, but such a thing is possible in the established Church of England, which only goes to show that religion as the sword of State is neither militant, nor powerful, as the case was in the medieval times.

An examination must be made here of the implications of the Established Church in Britain and in the countries belonging to the British Empire and the Commonwealth. The Roman Catholic Church which was sought to be established in the wake of and as an adjunct to the Roman invasion of Britain, ever since the Pagan slaves of East Anglia were presented to the Pope in Rome, had not served its purpose as the enduring basis for the organisation of the State even in that small country. One need not delve into the great mass of contemporary literature in the Tudor Period, to show that the revolt against the Romanism of the Pope and of the Papacy of Rome, as also against the Established Church, was for securing their elimination as the principal religious pillars of the State in Britain. But, it is clear that King Henry VIII and his eight wives, and the conflict concerning the dispensation regarding the marriage of one, were not responsible for the destruction of Papacy as the sword behind the State. The

elimination of the Roman Catholic Church as one of the basic foundations of the polity of Britain, is a clear illustration of the futility of the sword of religion attempting to support the polity of a people, though I do not deny the existence even today of the Established Church, which was more or less responsible for the abdication of King Edward VIII as the monarch of England, on the score that a reigning sovereign could not, in terms of Anglican ritual, marry a divorcee. But these are not arguments to show that religion backs up the State in England today, to the extent possible and even deemed necessary during the time of Papacy.

There is still the Established Church in England, which is linked up with the State on perhaps the flimsiest possible type of relationship, but the onslaught of the religion of the Pope, as a measure of his temporal Power, has been consistently resisted in Britain, as a reflex effect of the militant evangelical approach which the Christian theocracy sought to exploit as a link between the North and the South and the East and the West under the aegis of Rome. The temporal power of the Pope was substantial in the earlier days of Roman Catholicism, and certainly subsists with reference to the continued existence of the Vatican State even today. The existence of the Vatican, however, is only one modern example of the efforts of religion to cling to temporal power on a small symbolical scale, so that the conversion of the Pagans to the "divine religion" might get merged into a territorial polity, without inspiring the fear of the world. But a single

Vatican cannot mean the emergence of a theocratic State, which is to evoke enthusiasm among modern political societies.

I am not concerned here with the religious wars of Byzantium, which were only the sectional wars inside Christendom, but any true appreciation of these minor sectarian conflicts inside the major denominational religions in the world, only establishes the point that the early efforts of any new religion to stabilise itself always ended up with temporal establishments, represented by theocratic States, which collapsed at the first wafting of an unfriendly breath. The rapid progress and the territorial pursuits of early Christianity ultimately yielded up the futile endeavours of the Holy Roman Empire and the Papacy, and the Inquisition to stem the tide of non-conforming Protestant revolt, directly against the Roman Catholic State, in a manner which ultimately led to the destruction of the Church-cum-State, which was sought to be organised by Roman Catholicism as the only bulwark capable of ensuring its preservation from external attack. The Christian Crusades against militant Islam of a later era supply us with conflicting glimpses of a remarkably unified effort on the part of Christendom (comprising a series of nationalities and races with distinctive characteristics) to liberate the Holy Land, and to establish something like the Christian international mandate of polity, which was calculated to create and preserve a religious, State far more potent and real than the temporal trappings of the State which the Pope surrounds himself with today. But the failure of



the Christian Crusades to achieve this object is one of the gravest warnings of History against any supine effort of religion-intoxicated people to establish a theocratic State, obviously ostensibly for the glorification of God and His Church (in the widest connotation of the term), but actually as a physical, military and political prop to their denominational religion, which they seek to preserve against the valiant attacks from without of similar denominational religions of people who do not see eye to eye with them. Today it is the reverse of the early Christian Crusades against Islam, and the Balfour Declaration is pitting itself against Arab nationalism, under which it is not the Christian but the Jew who has to find a national home, meaning thereby a political State supported by religion in the Holy Land of Christ. I am not sure whether the Jewish national home in Palestine will ever succeed in becoming an actuality and, if it ever becomes an actuality, whether international Jewry will become a sovereign political State, without any reference to the continued existence of the British bayonets to support it, though I know that Premier Nahas Pasha was deprived of his office in Egypt to appease the British Imperialists who have no patience with the Pan-Islamic Conference he had recently organised. It is a curious commentary on the strivings of man through the ages, that he does not reckon with the moral of History, and that he elects to continue with his futile quest towards the establishment of a religious State, on foundations which really do not have even the least chance of survival.

The Established Church of England had been taken by the British to their Imperial possessions overseas, and even today the Indian tax-payer's money is partly utilised for the maintenance of the ecclesiastical establishments of the Government of India. I am afraid that these ecclesiastical establishments of the Government of India are bound to be with us, so long as the essential equation between India and England as *master and slave* exists, but it is clear that these ecclesiastical establishments which are financed from out of the public funds, especially for the benefit of the Christian servants of the Crown, do not constitute the Established Church of India. I need not here quote the solemn declaration of religious neutrality given by Queen Victoria at the time of her assumption of the Imperial Crown of India. Whether England consistently sought to set up one religious community against another to ensure her presence in our midst, or not, is beside the point of my argument here, but it must be admitted that, barring the religious establishments for the Christian servants of the Crown, there is no Established Church supporting British rule in this country, whatever might have been the results of the indecent haste with which the original soldiers and functionaries of John Company, and even the later British proconsuls, sought to claim the adherence of Hindus and Muslims, even at the risk of committing fraud, to Christianity. There are Anglican and Roman Catholic chaplains maintained by the "Christian" Government of India, for the special benefit of their Christian servants, and this curiously

non-denominational adherence to Christianity by a State, whose monarch is an Anglican, only demonstrates the fact that the ecclesiastical establishments of the Government of India do not constitute the Established Church of the country.

I suppose England would have perished in India, if she had sought to make Christianity the basis of her sojourn in our midst. England had not come to us with any consistent crusading spirit. She had come to us and is struggling to be with us (or, perhaps, I should say, over us) with the purely economic motive of exploitation, and if she struggles on with the inconsiderable ecclesiastical establishments for the special benefit of the Christian servants of the Crown, I, for one, would not have any quarrel with her on this score. When once I succeed in getting terminated British domination over me, the Christian ecclesiastical establishments which are paid for from out of the public revenues would automatically cease, and European Christians in this country and the hundreds and thousands of my Indian Christian fellow citizens would have the guarantee of freedom of religious worship in the way they seek best to find their equation with their Maker, and there the matter ends so far as British polity and religion in our midst are concerned. The endowments, if any, of the Christian Church in India, would be preserved in tact, but there cannot be any question that in the future polity of the country they would be allowed to continue to constitute a charge upon public revenues.

*Na-vishnu Prihvi Pathi* is one of the oldest

definitions of statecraft according to the traditional Hindu concept of politics and society. The vicegerency of God on earth has been assumed and preserved as sacrosanct by ancient Hindu kings, at a time when the organisation of society was either pastoral or rural in character. The ancient Hindu kings have annexed unto themselves the attributes of God on Earth, presumably with the willing co-operation and acquiescence of the people who, at the period at which this type of statecraft and political organisation was predominant, believed more in the sanctity of the blood-tie than in the niceties of the equation which ought to subsist between man and society, man and country, and man and politics. Erudite treatises have been written by early Hindu thinkers on the essential bases of social and political organisation within the four corners of a territorial concept for the State, and whether one wades through *Sukraniti* or Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, or, for that matter any of the other ancient Hindu texts which have any bearing upon an examination of polity and State, including the relevant portions of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, one would come to the conclusion that statecraft, even within the meaning of the vicegerency of the king on Earth on behalf of God, had a definitely delimitable territorial basis.

If King Henry the VIII had obtained, through a curious trick of fortune, the title "Defender of the Faith" only in the XVI century, the early Hindu kings had for millennia before exercised their Divine Right as the protectors of religion and as the principal

exponents of the religious approach to the organisation of society and statecraft. The preservation of the caste system, which is the sum total of approach of man towards his fellowmen and towards God in the early days of Hinduism, had thus become the primary function of the king on earth in Hindu statecraft. These attributes of divinity, which Hindu kings fondly clung to in the historic period, had gone to make possible the deliberate organisation of polity and society under their leadership, obviously in principle at the point of the sword, on the basis that within closely defined territories the religion of the king, meaning thereby the religion of the people, had to be preserved intact with studied effort and zest.

There are recorded instances of the sword of religion being brandished by some of the ancient kings of India against non-conformity, and I cannot give a greater or more appropriate example than that of Emperor Asoka, who, having hacked his way through Brahmanical India and cried halt only after the holocaust of Kalinga, "unsheathed" again the incongruously merciful sword of Buddhism, to spread light and culture to the whole country and the rest of the world. I am not quite sure in my mind whether the historic ceremony of *Aswamedh*, even of the variety described in *Uttara Rama Charitra*, had anything to do with the sword of religion being used by the King concerned, in order to proclaim and re-establish conformity within and even without his dominions. If I am not mistaken, this picturesque ceremony had more a military than a religious

aspect, in the sense that the territories covered by the sacrificial horse were brought under the political suzerainty of the king, than under the religious domination of the State concerned. The idea and ideal of *Ram Raj* had persisted right through the ages even to the present day, as something to be approximated to in terms of a purely Hindu type of social organisation and territorial politics. But I would be sceptical in dogmatically asserting whether this *Ram Raj* had the sword of religion behind it, in order that non-conformists right through the ages were brought under the common flag of a religion, supported by the panoply of power and coercion represented by a political State.

The failure of Asoka's *jihad* against Brahmanical Hinduism had apparently taught a salutary lesson to the Hindu kings right through the Christian era, in order that they might not venture into a realm of religious politics which was militant and uncompromising. It is true that even in the XVIII century King Shivaji unsheathed the sword of religion, and was successful in upholding it on behalf of the Hindus (or *Hindudom* as Veer Savarkar would like to put it) against the merciless onslaught of proselytizing Islam in India at that period of our national history. But it would be cruelly wrong to suggest that King Shivaji organised a Hindu *jihad* against Islam. On the contrary, King Shivaji's approach was more or less in terms of a counter-*jihad*, or defensive war, against the activities of the Muslim conquerors of India to stamp out the idolatrous, infidel Hindu. That is to say, the Hindu revival in

Maharashtra, which at one time spread over the length and breadth of India as a whole, had nothing to do with the conversion of the *mlechch*, which in any case is theologically unthinkable in terms of the ancient fabric of Hinduism (despite isolated recorded instances of Greeks embracing Jainism) as a religion, way of life or social organisation, but was more a conscious effort to withstand the onslaught of the incoming Muslim hordes which, in the true traditions of Ghazni and Ghorī, had sworn to stamp out non-conformity (within the meaning of Islam) wherever it had existed.

At a later stage I will be showing the manner in which the Muslim *jihad*, instead of continuing to be aggressive in character became defensive in approach to the problems of society and organisation of the State, until it had completely vanished, at any rate in the XX century, as illustrated by the national histories of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Egypt and even Afghanistan. But, as far as what I venture to term the Hindu counter-*jihad* is concerned, it is clear that the motive was not aggressive, that the method of approach was certainly not territorially militant, in the sense that it did not go beyond the territorial confines of the country inhabited by the Hindus of the period concerned, and that it was purely a gigantic effort on the part of the Hindus to preserve their religion against the openly declared *jihad* of the Muslims of the aggressive type known to history not only in India, but also in the various parts of the world, spreading from Morocco to Korea; and from Saville to Bali right through the historic period.

The British Government of India have statutorily separated the Sikhs from the Hindus for purposes of communal determination and in the hoary traditions of *divide et impera*, but despite the thinness of the distinction between a Hindu Jat, a Sikh Jat and a Muslim Jat in the Punjab these days, it is obvious that a Sikh is a Hindu to the core, conforming to the basic principles of Hinduism, though pursuing an exclusive type of living and organisation as ordained by the ten Gurus and the *Granth Sahib*. The merciless persecution by the Muslim conquerors, between the XIV and XVIII centuries, compelled the Hindus of the Punjab to group themselves together into a militant band pledged to the support and preservation of Hindu culture, tradition, social organisation and, even for that matter, purity of blood. Anyone who has gone through Macauliffe's volumes on the Sikhs would marvel at the tenacity of purpose of these Hindu protestants in withstanding the onslaughts of the superiorly equipped Muslim conquerors and rulers during these centuries, and a *paean* of approbation would be bestowed upon this small but virile community, which is the flesh of the flesh and blood of the blood of the Hindus, for having succeeded in resisting their engulfment and total religious obliteration by the early Muslim conquerors of this land. Actually, the establishment of the Sikh Kingdom culminating in the sovereignty of King Ranjit Singh would be remembered in history as a glorious example of the fruits of self-discipline and self-effort which any group of people can achieve, provided they have the



motive force of religion behind their earthly activity. No one can say that the sword of religion unsheathed by the Sikhs against Muslim persecution was or even today is an aggressive instrument for the stamping out of non-conformity wherever it existed. The Sikh conflict with Muslim hordes which surrounded this small and virile community in the Punjab was necessarily a religious war, but it was not a religious war based upon the principle of *jihad*, meaning thereby the extermination of the non-conforming *mlechh*. On the contrary, it was a last-ditch stand of a motley crowd of heroic Hindus, inspired successfully by their ten Gurus, to band together four square against the merciless and sustained onslaughts of Islam, and it must be said to the credit of the Sikhs that even persecution, of the cruel type one does not meet elsewhere in the entire annals of history, was insufficient to stamp out their achievement in the realm of man's cherished equation with his Maker. No one outside Bedlam would suggest that the religious wars of the Sikhs, or the sword of religion unsheathed by the Sikhs, during the two or three centuries before the British occupation of this country, had anything to do with aggressiveness in religion. If I may vary the metaphor again, the Sikh religious wars were defensive wars, identical with the wars waged by King Shivaji, intended for securing the *preservation* and not the expansion of Hinduism at the expense of non-conformists surrounding Hinduism.

I can go on multiplying instances of this character to further demonstrate the point that the

sword of religion was never unsheathed in the socio-political or socio-military sense as, for example, early Islam and the Holy Roman Church contrived to bring about for a thousand years after the birth of Christ. The obvious explanation for this curious twist to the extra-territorial approach of Hinduism is a simple one. Hinduism does *not* believe in conversion, and I say this in the face of the evidence supplied by numerous protestant movements within the fold of Hinduism, which sprang up almost in a crusading spirit and endeavoured to dismember the main body of the Hindus into so many sects, creeds and socio-religious groups. The *Tantrik*, the *Vaishnavite*, the *Nastik* and a host of other forms had all sprung from out of the bosom of Hinduism, whose catholicity and universality are such that they are not placed outside the pale.

It is not my purpose here to paint in glorious colours the achievements of Hinduism, demonstrating its indestructibility, but I am mentioning these simply to show that for possibly five thousand years or more—from the primitive animism of the ancient Aryans so forcibly brought out in the *Rig Veda* to the present multi-pronged type of denominationalised and institutionalised religion, ranging from the highest systems of metaphysics known to the human mind to what the Muslim would perhaps call the sheer idolatry inside a Hindu temple today—Hinduism deliberately eschewed the need for conformity within its fold and always kept, in the military sense, sheathed the sword of religion, and preserved itself as a code of religion and a way of social organisation

in which dissidents had a place of their own, in a manner which has no parallel in the history of man's religion anywhere. Occasionally, a great religious leader like Sankaracharya undertook a crusade against irreligion, or non-religion within the fold of Hinduism, but even the crusade of Sankaracharya, which must be presumed to have been taken to almost every corner of India, had not the arms of Kings and free-booters which, for example, the crusades of the early Omayyads or the Holy Roman Church had, almost at the time when Sankaracharya himself lived and sought the fulfilment of his earthly mission as one of the truest exponents of the pristine principles of Hinduism.

Hindu history and tradition draw a distinction between *Dharma* and *Adharma Yudh*, the justified and unjustifiable wars, as between two kings or kingdoms or peoples. The battle of Kurukshetra was one of the most eloquent illustrations of this distinction between right and wrong, the appropriate and the inappropriate, and the justified and the unjustifiable wars which were legion in the historic period. The principal epics of India, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* and, even for that matter, the *Bhagavata* give us numerous illustrations of the wars of the mere mortal Hindus against the *Asuras*, the *Rakshasas* and a host of other non-conforming elements surrounding the Hindu territories, against whom incessant battle was waged by the Hindu kings. A trite example of this type of approach to statecraft, inter-statal relations and social preservation is that of the successful Hindu wars against

Banasura, Narakasura and, even for that matter Ravana. Sometimes we find occasion for a group of Hindu kings banding themselves together and marching as a solid phalanx against these non-conforming elements surrounding their kingdoms and even surrounding the earth, whose declared purpose was always stated to be the stamping out of the Hindu *Dharma* and the spoliation of Hindu society. Sometimes we find mortal kings joining hands with the celestial *Devas* for the purpose of contriving the destruction of these, shall I say, non-mortal or sub-human non-conformists, who had sworn to bring about the destruction of the cardinal principles of Hinduism. These non-conforming elements were no doubt successfully destroyed in the so-called *Dharma Yudh* of the ancient Hindu kings, but the most important point to be remembered in this connection is that there was no conversion of these non-conforming, non-human or sub-human elements into the Hindu fold. That is to say, whenever the religious war was waged by the Hindus, even as the religious wars were waged by King Shivaji or King Ranjit Singh, they were specifically waged for the purpose of the preservation of the Hindu system of socio-religious organisation and polity against attacks from without, and not for the purpose of conquering the world and subduing the non-conforming elements into immersion into the fold of Hinduism. *Suddhi* and *Sanghatan* might have become the expedients of XX century Hindu India, against the accumulation of a thousand years of forcible conversion by Islam as a tenet of faith, but it would be hard even in an

allegorical sense, to discover a single instance, in the entire range of mythological and historical tradition of the Hindu, of a non-conformist being given the Hindu *Dharma* and taken into the Hindu fold.

I am not forgetting for a single moment the fact that ancient Hindu missionaries had crossed the Seven Seas, in order to carry the message of the liberalising and constructive influence of the Hindu *Dharma*. I have seen with my own eyes the vestiges of Hindu missionary enterprise in countries like Indo-China ( *Kambhoj* ), Siam and elsewhere through the length and breadth of South-East Asia, but this Hindu missionary enterprise of the ancient days had nothing to do with the sword of religion, in the sense that it was not a *jihad* against non-conformists or sub-human peoples wherever they existed, but that it carried light and culture and made them a votive offering at the altar of sublimated humanity, in order to lift it from the degrading conditions of non-religion or irreligion. I must, in parenthesis, refer to occasional conflicts between these newly formed Hindu settlements overseas and the lesser religions of the world, *e. g.*, the colossal religious wars culminating in the architectural ruins of Angkor-wat in Cambodia, but this has nothing to do with any aggressive spirit of Hinduism proper, with reference to the relationship of man with man on earth, and of man with his Maker in heaven.

I must, however, take note here of the reflex effects of the concept of *Ram Raj* on the social character and the political conception of the State

under a typical Hindu *regime*. As I have said earlier, the basic approach of the State under a Hindu king was that of the maintenance by him of God's vicegerency on earth. Then there was the *chatur varna* ( caste system ) which had to be maintained as much as possible, both in terms of religion and socio-economic organisation, but with the essential qualification that non-conforming elements in the community were more or less given the widest possible scope to fend for themselves, should they choose such a precarious earthly career. Otherwise, we would not find within our midst the countless number of creeds and sects flourishing in happy isolationism, for what it is worth. I cannot imagine, for I definitely know, that forcible conversion to Hinduism ever was either a proposition for religion or for the State in ancient India, in so far as, I have said, conversion was obnoxious in terms of the essential Hindu ethic. It is quite conceivable that, when the early law-givers of Hinduism and its princely exponents found their activity spreading all over the country and, also possibly, beyond the territorial borders of this country, at a period of transition from a pastoral to, what may be termed in terms of modern parlance, a fixed social organisation, attempts might have been made to preach the basic principles of Hinduism to the animists and others at the dawn of civilization and history. But even here, as I have said, I do not think that Rama ever thought of giving his religion to the defeated Ravana and his community of sub-humans or non-humans, who, curiously enough,

were themselves perhaps the most ardent worshippers of Shiva, who is one of the Hindu Trinity, with the result that non-conformity to prevailing conceptions of Hindu approach to life and living, even in terms of the organisation of the State, had lost most of its meaning to the "conquering heroes" of Hinduism.

This does not, however, mean that the organisation of the State under Hinduism did not have something like a religious approach. It was the duty of the king to endow the Brahman with the earthly equipment, which is necessary for the preservation of the caste-approach to the organisation of society and the State, even though it will be seen that a puritanical Brahmanism, which is the equivalent to the idealistic Brahmanism of the *Vedas*, was based upon the twin theory of abstinence and renunciation—abstinence from headlong indulgence in ordinary human sensations, and renunciation of the earth and the earthly goods. It is a trifle difficult to distinguish between the endowments made to the village temple and the village priest by the king and the community, but the fact remains that the Hindu *devasthans* of today have some *nexus* to alienation in perpetuity of the property of the State, which is the equivalent of being the property of the King, under a typical Hindu system of territorial politics. To the extent that Hindu religious endowments, whether they originated from the largesse of the King or of the community, form an institution, to which Islam offers an equivalent in its *Wakfs*, they are institutions of history

towards which, as I have said earlier, the citizen of a State can only have reverent indifference.

It is also difficult for any honest Hindu to project his mind into the appropriate type of political State one would like to have today or tomorrow, without in some fashion or other securing, shall I say in modern legalistic form, the statutory recognition of these institutions of history. But, it is clear that, through thousands of years of historical development, even of the fully sovereign early type of Hindu socio-political organisation, tolerance towards non-conformists had been the primary and fundamental approach, with the result that there was never any undue or unjustified emphasis on religion being the approach to the State proper. What I am trying to drive at is that we never found, under the Hindu organisation of State, a situation similar to what the Muslim invaders of India had created, e.g., collection of *jizia* (poll tax from infidel Hindus), forcible conversion to Islam, compelling the non-conformists at the point of the sword to eschew his vegetarianism and to eat beef, and a host of other crude but apparently very delectable approaches to what, shall I say, the early *Caliphs* sought to have in terms of the *millats* within their territories.

I have absolutely no desire to whitewash the crudities of the Hindu type of approach to social organisation and the polity of the community and the State, but I would not be true to myself, as a born Hindu with some pretensions to the knowledge of the sacerdotal forms of approach to religion and its



implications to the community, if I do not unhesitatingly emphasize the point that tolerance to non-conformity, which might range from eclecticism to atheism, has been the basic approach of Hinduism to the individual, the community and the State. If today there are certain historical anachronisms, e.g., the *devasthans* and a fastly crumbling organisation of society on the basis of the caste system, the attitude of a patriotic Hindu towards them must necessarily be one of reverent indifference.

In my time, I have taken an intimate part in *Harijan* work, and for four years lived in the midst of *Harijans*, losing, as a penalty for this "crime", the right to the Hindu sacrament in the eyes of what I may term the obscurantist *pundits*, who parrot-like continue to repeat uncomprehended dry texts of ancient Hinduism, but I am convinced that this is not the approach to life and living today of the average Hindu. A decade ago, after the historic Poona Pact which saved Gandhiji's life, it was a period of high expectation about a complete reorganisation and reconstruction of Hindu society, and Mahatma Gandhi undertook on foot his *Harijan* tour of Orissa. It was his programme to get access to the Hindu temples and *devasthans* for the *Harijans* of the land, since they were endowed either by the king or by the community in a distant past, which cannot be ascertained with sufficient clarity these days. There were sanguinary incidents when some of the *savarna* (high caste) temples were approached by the so-called untouchables of the land, even though, at a later stage, a single procla-

mation of a Hindu prince had statutorily given them the right of entry to these institutions of history and hoary religion in the State of Travancore. I remember receiving, on behalf of the *Harijan* community of Vizagapatam, Mahatma Gandhi, after the completion of his Orissa tour ten years ago, and even today I vividly recall the almost unbelievable surprise of Mahatma Gandhi when it was arranged that he should open a beautiful temple built by the *Harijans* for themselves, for I believed, even at that time, the need for a change of heart, and that the highest of the high must go down to the level of the lowest of the low, if such had ever existed within the fold of Hinduism proper, in the communion of a common prayer to the Maker, that society be preserved in terms of harmony and fellowship. I am quite sure that the fellow Brahman who, like myself, had the courage to perform the religious ceremonies necessary for the formal opening of a Hindu temple for the *Harijans*, must have been thrown to the wolves by the Hindu pharisees, who are available unfortunately in our midst by the million even today. But the fact remains that I, as a self-respecting individual and a born high caste Hindu, meaning thereby the *vaidik* Brahman, would sooner have a *regime* of things in which I would descend to the levels of the lowest of the low (believe me, not with any sense of haughty condescension), than spoil for some sort of civil strife, simply because the so-called untouchable approaches, even with humility, these institutions of history and religion. But this is an

organisational question which I need not pursue here at any greater length.

I have said that Hinduism would not have survived the onslaughts from without of the most aggressive type, but for its catholicity and that undefinable something which gives it a vitality all its own, unmatched either in Christendom or Islam. A great Muslim divine, whose piety and skill are recognised even by the *Al-Azhar* University at Cairo, not to speak of Islam wherever it exists today, had attempted to give his considered opinion upon religion in our midst, and I cannot do better than quote this appraisal which, I am sure, every Hindu and Muslim in this country would endorse. This is what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad said: "It was India's historical destiny that many human races and cultures and religions should flow to her, finding a home in her hospitable soil, and that many caravans should rest here..... One of the last of these caravans, following the foot-steps of its predecessors, was that of the followers of Islam..... This led to a meeting of the culture currents of two different races. Like the Ganges and the Jumna, they flowed for a while through separate courses. But Nature's immutable law brought them together and joined them in a *sangam*. The thousand years of our joint life have moulded us into a common nationality. This cannot be done artificially. Nature does her fashioning through her hidden processes in the course of centuries. Whether we like it or not, we have now become an Indian nation, united and indivisible. No artificial scheming to separate and divide will break this unity."

Political considerations have led to the emergence of a medieval type of religious approach to rear its head in our midst today, as the only basis for the Hindu and the Muslim to settle their differences, but this phase is now passing. But it is clear that the sword of religion behind Islam had long since ceased to be the motive force behind statecraft, in the same fashion in which the sword of religion behind Hinduism, when it first came into contact with what I have called the animism of the inhabitants of this country in a hoary past which is now almost shrouded in mystery, had vanished into thin air. It may be a trifle unpleasant for an Indian patriot to dig up the past of Islam, even only for the purpose of showing that the sword of religion had been sheathed and securely locked up for centuries together, even in the countries of the Holy Prophet (Peace be on Him) and of the Caliphs. But I must attempt such an analysis and appraisal with reference to the Islamic past, and with the assistance of indisputable authorities in the English language, for I have not that pretence to knowledge of the Arabic and the Persian texts which I might, with a sense of *faux-pas* in my idiotic moments, try to claim along with the countless numbers of *Pandits* and *Mullahs* in respect of Hinduism.

An appraisal of the early foundations of the Muslim State—whether it be under the Omayyads, the Ottomans or the Moguls—is appropriate in this place for our argument. From Baghdad  
MUSLIM  
JIHAD to Cordova, from Kabul to Imphal,  
Muslim rule spread itself out in the historical

period with the crusading fervour of the *jihad*. From the Battle of the Pavements in France to the sack of Delhi by Ahmad Shah Abdali, it was one long and even sordid story of an attempt to secure the extermination of the *kaffir*, be he White or Brown, or in the alternative his forcible conversion to Islam, or his persecution.

But I pay my tribute to Islam, despite its medieval characteristics of a theocratic or religious state, for what it has given to the world and to me in terms of a highly organised system of medicine, mathematics and historiography, and for the manner in which it stood four square for long centuries, against the counter crusades of Christendom, until the emergence of European powers as maritime nations and the discovery of gunpowder as the principal achievement of Christian alchemy led to the ultimate political destruction of Constantinople and the gradual dismemberment of the Omayyad dynasty. Unless I am grossly mistaken, it would appear that triumphant Christianity had learnt its lesson from the failure of Islam to maintain a theocratic state and dominion over the conquered territories, which had at one time spread all over the Mediterranean littoral, whether it be Egypt, Morocco, Spain, France or even Italy. I believe it is the verdict of history that the failure of the Muslim *regime* of the *zimmi* or *kaffir* and of the crusades of Christendom against Islam is responsible for the elimination of religion as the principal adjunct to the evolution of the State, as conceived and maintained by the Western Imperial Powers which, at any rate during the past

three centuries following in the wake of the destruction of Islam as an international political power, had come to rule the world, but for the temporary interlude of the past three years represented by the Japanese occupation of South-East Asia, which claims millions of Muslims who live in complete isolation from their compeers in India and the Near East.

Coming nearer home, ever since the first Arab set his foot on the soil of Sind 1,200 years ago, till the fall of Bahadur Shah to the guns of the East India Company nearly two hundred years ago, there were one or two features of importance which I must notice. The long years of Ghazni and Ghorī and the sack of Somnath, conformed to the pristine tradition of the Muslim *jihad* and the extermination of the Hindu *kaffir* and his forms of worship, in order that the Muslim way of life was accepted by every living individual on the face of the earth. Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali represented the special type of Muslim buccaneers, who were out for the loot of the rich plains of Hindustan, though they were certainly good Muslims and genuinely believed that by their work they would be going to their pre-ordained *Vallalah*, if in the process of loot and destruction they also destroyed the *kaffir* and his religion, and claimed him, even at the point of the sword, to Islam. Let me now pause for a little while here to review the centuries of Mogul rule proper in our midst. Emphasis on the *kaffir-nexus* of the activities of the early Mogul rulers was there in unmistakable form, but the Moguls had come to

stay in India and, strangely enough, had stayed, with the result that the purity of Arab blood, as the concomitant of Islam, was no longer sought to be maintained, and intermarriages with *kaffirs* took place by the million, from the Emperor down to the rank and file of his freebooters and buccaneers. By the time Akbar became the Emperor of India, most of the Muslim established churches of the country were losing their momentum, and the organised State was coming gradually to the creed of such of the *kaffirs* themselves who were able to maintain their individuality and religion, despite the ever-pervading grip of the Muslim rulers. Akbar himself proclaimed his principle of religious neutrality which he had so eloquently enshrined in his creed *Din Ilahi*, and a *firman* issued by Emperor Aurangzeb (who is popularly misrepresented as the most notorious Hindu-baiter) is still extant which shows that this most puritanical Muslim Ruler of India respected Hindu sentiment and ordered the protection of the cow.\*

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who is not a friend of the Hindus (*Thoughts on Pakistan*), premises that *Pakistan* and *Hindustan* had existed side by side in India during the twelve hundred years, from the time Mohammad Bin Qasim who conquered Sind in 712 A.D. There are in this book passages taken from contemporary Muslim evangelical literature, and I must emphasise the "evangelical" aspect of the adventures of the Tartars, the Afghans and the Moguls—the three main currents of Muslim invasion of India, which

\* See my book *Cow Protection In India*, South Indian Humanitarian League, Madras, 1927.

Dr. Ambedkar postulates to terrify the present-day Indian out of his wits, and to demonstrate the efficacy of the *jihad* as practised by Ghazni, Ghorī, Aibak, Timur and Aurangzeb, which included infliction of slaughter, rape, the forcible conversion and spoliation of the economic status of Hindus by the invaders, who came and went during the chequered period of the long years of history represented by the so-called Muslim conquest of India. There is one curious passage in Dr. Ambedkar's book, which, however, knocks the bottom out of the entire basis of this argument about the predatory and punitive type of conquest and administration of India by the early Muslims. Here it is (pp. 50-51): "These invasions of India by Muslims were as much invasions of India, as they were wars among the Muslims themselves. This fact has remained hidden, because the invaders are all lumped together as Muslims without distinction. But as a matter of fact they were Tartars, Afghans and Moghuls. Mohammad Ghazni was a Tartar, Mohammad Ghorī was a Moghul, Timur was a Mongol, Babar was a Tartar, and Nadir Shah and Ahmadshah Abdali were Afghans. In invading India, the Afghan was out to destroy the Tartar, and the Mongol was out to destroy both the Tartar as well as the Afghan. They were not a loving family cemented by the feeling of Islamic brotherhood. They were deadly rivals of one another and their wars were often wars of mutual extermination." If this was the statement of one of the protagonists among non-Muslims of India in favour of the Two-Nation theory, it is a present



to the iconoclast *Pakistanites* in this country, and it is also an adverse testimony from one of their staunch admirers and supporters in their grand drive towards the dismemberment of this country. In fairness to Dr. Ambedkar, I must, however, quote the remaining three lines from the paragraph preserved above. He says : "What is, however, important to bear in mind is that with all their internecine conflicts, they were all united by one common objective, and that was to destroy the Hindu faith."

I have tried to wade through the four hundred pages of Dr. Ambedkar's book of diatribes and half-truths in order to find his basic conclusions. In one sentence he sums up his position (page 347): "It is true I have not given any finding." But any Indian reader going through this sustained attack upon the territorial and political integrity of India, can give the finding himself from the tables of statistics preserved by Dr. Ambedkar, whose scholarship and hard work cannot be impugned. According to him, the computation of Muslim population of Indian provinces is in the aggregate 25.9 per cent, and of Indian States, again in the aggregate, 12.7 per cent. These percentages vary from 1.09 in Orissa, to 73.7 in Sind, and from .01 per cent. in Sikkim to 97.5 per cent. in Baluchistan States. Dr. Ambedkar gives a series of maps naming the "Muslim" areas to the west and east of India. He marks thirteen districts of the present province of the Punjab as Hindu (he does not mention Sikhs at all in this connection). In regard to Bengal and Assam, he lists twenty-two districts of both the Provinces, which literally hem in the

fourteen Muslim districts in terms of a horse shoe, with three areas represented by feudatory States, for which he does not give any population composition. I have tried to obtain enlightenment from Dr. Ambedkar as to what he would do, or what the *Pakistanites* would do, with some of the Muslim States like Hyderabad in which the Muslim population is only 10.4 per cent. But, of course, it is a very inconvenient question, which neither Dr. Ambedkar, nor any of the fanatical Muslims who want their territorial share out of this country, can possibly care to answer.

Muhammad Asad, an Austrian convert to Islam, whom the late Allama Iqbal characterised as a very powerful thinker, says: "Islamic civilization is the most complete form of theocracy history has ever known" (*Islam at the Crossroads*, p. 31). He further says: ".....The very foundations of modern Western Civilization are incompatible with Islam. This should in no way preclude the possibility of Muslims receiving from the West certain impulses in the domain of exact and applied sciences; but their cultural relations should begin and end at that point. To go further, to imitate the Western Civilization in its spirit, its mode of life and its social organisation is impossible, without giving a vital blow to the very existence of Islam as a theocratic polity and practical religion" (*italics mine*) (p. 55).

Mohamed Abdullah Enan, Assistant Director, Press Department, Ministry of the Interior, Cairo, (*Decisive Moments in the History of Islam*), discussing the religious policy of the Arabs, clearly indicates

the early principles of Muslim *jihad*, including the forcible conversion of the *zimmis* (non-Muslims, particularly of the Near East, Spain, etc.) and gives an eloquent account of long centuries of Islamic tradition of the earlier type, which believed in forcible conversion, and collection of *jizia* (tribute). He quotes one of the letters of the second Caliph Omar, under whose regime the political tenets of Islam were stated to be as follows: "The Zimmis must be sealed in the neck with lead; they must show their belts, shave their beards and ride their mounts aside. The *jizia* (tribute) is to be imposed only on those who are already shaved (adults); it must not be imposed on women or boys. The Zimmis are not allowed to dress themselves in the same manner as the Moslems" (p. 18). Earlier, Enan declares that "the non-Moslem peoples were always considered by Moslem society as inferior from the social point of view; in the fields of public life they were deprived of the protection, respect and pride which the Moslem enjoyed. This distinction dates from the early days of Islam; it was officially designed and laid down by state" ( pp. 17-18 ).

But surveying the entire history of the phenomenal Muslim expansion in the West, including Spain, France and Italy, under the early Caliphs, particularly prior to the onrush of the Christian Crusades, Enan indicates the unmistakable manner in which the Caliphate system found itself beaten in its religious policy towards the *zimmis*, and comes to the conclusion that the early evangelistic and even militant religious approach of the Omayyads

gradually gave place to a regime of toleration towards non-conformists. There is, however, this curious passage in Enan's survey: "Thus, this peaceful and enlightened policy, adopted by the Governments of the Caliphs towards its new subjects, led at first to gaining their support through religious tolerance, and their material help through payment of tribute, and then at last to their embracing Islam and thus securing their moral and material support at the same time. Thus, it appears that the spread of Islam with this overwhelming rapidity was not always in conformity with the policy of the Caliphate and that it was, at one time, prejudicial to its material interests. This throws light on an astounding historical fact denied or misrepresented by most of the western writers who write on Islam, and on the methods of its diffusion and the causes of its being so deeply rooted; it also explains how the Government of the Caliphs was, at the same time, an autocracy grasping all authority in its hands and a lenient instrument which gave way to liberal and democratic principles [ sic ]" (pp. 25-26 ).

The Wahabi Movement, which started early in the XIX century in this country as one of the puritanical developments of thought in Islam, was a tremendous force in modern political Islam in our midst. W. Cantwell Smith writes (*Modern Islam in India: A Social Anaylis*). "In the revolt against the Sikhs in the Punjab, and in the various uprisings against the British there and in Bengal, they proclaimed a *jihad* against the infidel, and appealed not only to the oppressed to unite against their exploiters, but to

the Muslims to unite for the defence of their religion. *None of these political activities, however, was anti-Hindu.*" (*italics mine*) (p. 189 ).

W. W. Hunter in his sympathetic book '*The Indian Mussalmans*' ( p. 107 ), referring to the Wahabi uprising around Calcutta in 1831, states that they "broke into the houses of Muslim and Hindu landlords with perfect impartiality". He indicates, however, that the upper class Muslims opposed these peasant rioters in search of an *egalitarian* society, with the result that the *fatwas* of the Muslim divines were directed against them for long decades. This is what Cantwell Smith writes (pp. 189-190). "The Wahabi Movement, therefore, did not set lower-class Muslims against lower class Hindus in open conflict, nor did it divert lower class Muslims from economic issues to a false solidarity with their communal friends but class enemies. Nonetheless, it did encourage communal attitudes, especially in religious thinking, and left a considerable section of the Muslim masses more susceptible to later communist propaganda than they might otherwise have been. The Mutiny, like the political *jihads* of the Wahabis, emphasized the Muslim community of India as a religio-political unit, but at the same time emphasized co-operation between that community and the Hindus in the face of a common enemy."

Khuda Baksh ( *Studies: Indian and Islamic*, p. 32 ) writing in 1912 in emphasis of the need for Indian unity exhorted the people: "May the Muslim solidarity—for purposes Indian—be merged into a higher, nobler Indian solidarity, mightily single". He

further says ( *Essays: Indian and Islamic*, p. 20 ), that these principles have been lost sight of by Indian Muslims, and I have to reckon with a series of developments in our midst which have had such catastrophic results these days.

For any proper appraisal of the manner in which the earlier iconoclasm and militant religious basis of Islam in India had spent its force, and the Muslims settled down in the country to the cultivation of the arts of peace and stability and co-equal partnership with non-Muslims, in the sharing of the burdens of statehood or nationhood, an examination must be made here of the lasting influence of the life and work of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and the Aligarh Movement, represented by him, Wiquar-ul Mulk, Nazir Ahmed, Shibli and Hali. My comprehension of Urdu literature is severely handicapped, and I quote below from Dr. S. M. Abdullah's book entitled "*The Spirit and Substance of Urdu Prose under the Influence of Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan*," to which the late Allama Iqbal wrote an appreciative foreword. I believe my Muslim friends in India would not dispute the authenticity of the quotations given below from this very important publication.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in his monumental publication "*Tafsir-ul-Quran*" "violently criticised the idea of  *Jihad*  of an aggressive nature so commonly prevalent among the Muslims. According to him, all the wars fought by the Prophet of Islam were defensive, and there is no injunction in the Holy Quran favouring the popular view of  *Jihad* " (p. 29). Shibli in his "*Sirat'un-Nabi*" also emphasised this

point and declared that "all the wars fought by the Holy Prophet were defensive" (p.130). Nazir Ahmed in his book "*Huquq Wal-Faraid*" stated: "the conditions necessitating such a war (*jihad*) do not exist under the British Government" ( p. 51 ).

Shibli Numani answering in the affirmative the question whether Islam can exist in the face of the present advancement of science and civilization, is stated to have affirmed that Islam ensures "absolute cultural autonomy for religious minorities in a Muslim state, in so far as they do not interfere with existing law and order". ( p. 60 ).

The progressive invasion of racialism over Islam is, however, indicated by the following passages relating to Sir Syed: "his interest in the international political movement, 'pan-Islamism', was intensified and, last of all, his experience and knowledge of other countries further stimulated in him the desire to revive modern Islamic society on a broader and a more rational basis" (p. 110). Shibli in "*Ilm'ul-Kalam*", answering the question why there were so many classes in Islam, "traces the causes of this, one of which was the dominating influence of Politics over Thought"(p. 57). Tracing the evolution of the ideas of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, particularly as a consequence of the development of his mind resulting from his visit to London in 1869 and the Aligarh Movement in general, Dr. Abdullah says that "while he sympathised with Indian aspirations, he seceded from the Indian National Congress and exhorted his co-religionists to remain aloof from its activities. He was a liberal politician, but above all

he was interested in the education of his own community. To achieve this, the *most cordial relations with the Government were considered essential*, (*italics mine*) (p. 19).

The late Sir Mohammad Iqbal, according to Cantwell Smith (*Modern Islam in India—A Social Analysis*, p. 12) “looked upon aggressive warfare as one of the horrors of modern civilization, and he criticized land-hungry *jiḥād* even in Islam. He used to say that the greatest misfortune of Islam was when it became an Empire.”

Iqbal's abhorrence of the then prevailing “pathetic piety” of the people is summed up in the following exhortation of his: “Go and fight, commands the Quran. Fight the devil in your bosom first.....and fight the evil outside.....Fight the devil of dirt and uncleanness in your surroundings, fight the devils of disease and poverty, fight malaria, fight plague, fight cholera, fight ignorance and illiteracy, fight the fat capitalist who defrauds and exploits the poor, fight the religious hypocrite who cheats the people under his cloak of piety, fight those who deprive you of your birthright of free manhood” (*ibid* p. 130).

Islam in India, during the past hundred years in particular, had to discharge the twin task of modernisation and reconstruction internally, and to link up with contemporaneous religious movements in the world, in other words, with pan-Islamism. I have already referred to the efforts of a century of the Wahabi Movement, in the course of which we have seen the ruthless manner in which the vested interests of orthodox theological leaders and the rich



among the Muslim community in the country attempted to thwart any horizontal integration of Indian Muslim society. I have already adverted to the manner in which the Aligarh School of Islamic thought tried to infuse racialism into the ethics and polity of Indian Islam, in order that Muslims in this country get their roots firmly implanted into the earth and, as a corollary, to retrieve the position they had lost at the time of the British conquests of the country, whether it be in the field of economic rehabilitation, political consciousness or cultural progress.

I am not here concerned with the insidious efforts of the British rulers of the country to divide the ranks of nationalist forces available to us, whether it be in respect of the efforts of Lord Minto at the dawn of the present century or of Lord Chelmsford at the conclusion of the last Great War, who artificially sought to put up "stooges" as propounders of the separatist political movement in this country in favour of the Muslim interests as distinct from those of India as a whole. But any one who knows the green-room tactics at the time of the Minto-Morley reforms and the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of the present century would readily recognise that Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan and his Aligarh Movement were not only inspired and financed but also controlled by the Government of India and their agents, but were the lineal predecessors of His Highness the Aga Khan and others. The manner in which our British masters have succeeded in keeping up this separatist agitation in India on the part of certain

Muslims, mostly through a horrible system of political spoils, has been kept up right through the course of the last quarter of a century, and including the rigmarole connected with the Simon Commission, the Round Table Conference and the Joint Select Committee, leading to the passing of the Constitution Act of 1935. Until the Lahore Session of the All-India Muslim League in 1940, when *Pakistan* became an integral creed of Muslim League politics, even the moderate Muslims of the country, who looked more to Government patronage than to loyalty of their co-religionists and the goodwill of their fellow subjects of other countries resident in the land, got disillusioned to such an extent, that today the sense of frustration, which has crippled the activities of the Indian nationalists during the past half a century, also came to invade the activities of the Muslim title seekers and job hunters, alongside of their Hindu compeers. When the history of modern times comes to be written, the verdict will be given that even *Quide Azam* Jinnah was influenced by the politics of *divide et impera* pursued by the authorities, but this is not a tract on Muslim League politics, with the result that I must proceed with an empirical examination of the evolution of the ideas of Muslim politics based on religion in this country.

The other twin aspect of the reconstructional activities of modern Islam in India is represented by the *pan-Islamic* approach of its leaders, as an escape from the realities of the loss of freedom, which emanated from the British succession to Muslim Emperors of the land. It is one of the most curious developments

of modern political thought and activity that Indian Muslims had come to recognise the need for considering themselves as the custodians of the fortunes of Islam outside India. There was the classic example of the oratory of that tub-thumper, Mr. Jamnadas Mehta, who today is the representative of the Government of India accredited to the *emigre* Government of Burma in Simla, when he cried hoarse in trying to convince the world that at the time of the *Khilafat* Movement twenty-five years ago in this country, both Gandhiji and the Ali Brothers invited ex-King Amanullah to invade our homes. Only lunatics in this country can believe a proposition like this, for the simple reason that the resources of ex-King Amanullah to invade India and to eject the British from out of our midst were too puny to be effective.

*Pan*-Islamism, however, continues to be one of the most profound influences affecting the political activity of Indian Mussalmans, despite the repeated rebuffs they have received, sometimes from their own co-religionists abroad, for example, from the late Ataturk, and consistently from His Majesty's Government during the fateful years of the inter-war period and up to the present day. I consider a short review of the origin and growth of the *pan*-Islamic movement and the futility attending upon the urge for external expression, before obtaining internal strength, on the part of certain sections of the Muslim community in this land, will serve a very useful purpose, that is to say, in the building up of the foundations of a secular State in this country, in

which the Hindu and the Muslim can co-operate towards securing the common task of liberating the Mother Country and towards establishing her position in the world of politics of tomorrow.

To the evolution of Islamic thought in India during the past half a century, Sir Mohammed Iqbal's contribution must be considered to be particularly important. This Indian poet of Islam has gone through varying moods and ideas before he arrived at the goal of *Pakistan* as a central concept of Muslim religio-politics in this country. The sense of frustration which the Indian Muslims came to feel during the fateful years marking the gradual disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the Caliphate, both on account of an assault from without and the assault from within, was the cause of this poesy of frustration, so eloquently illustrated by the *Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa* of Allama Iqbal. The ideas of  *Jihad*  and  *zimmis*  continue to hold that fascination which early Muslim crusaders and buccaneers possessed, but, if I do not do injustice to the memory of the late Allama Iqbal, these aggressive chantings of religious poetry really intended to take the Indian Muslim back to the hoary days of triumphant international Islam, which today, however, cannot be revived with all its unsullied glory.

Allama Iqbal begins his *Shikwa* with

“..... tis none but God Himself  
whom I, in sorrow, must arraign!”  
(1--3)

Iqbal's arraignment takes the form of a recapitulation of the former triumphs of Islam in the West and

( IV-3 )

(V-3)

(VI-3)

(IX-2)

(X-1)

“Yet see how still Thy bounties rain  
On roofs of unbelieving clans,

While strikes Thy thunder-bolt the homes  
Of all-forbearing Mussalmans !"

(XIV-3)

Then, asks Allama Iqbal, the question;  
"Why cherishest Thou not, O Lord,  
The Faithful as in days of yore ?"

(XVI-3)

"Is this Thy recompense to those  
Who sacrifice their lives for Thee ?"

(XVII-3)

In two typical stanzas Allama Iqbal brings in the iconoclasm of the early Muslims of India in a manner which strikes one as extraordinary, to say the least. Here are these two stanzas of importance.

"Did we forswear our faith to Thee ?  
To Thy dear Prophet cease to cling ?  
Of idol-breaking did we tire ?  
Or take to idol-worshipping ?"

(XXI-1)

"Bring Thou, O Lord, within our grasp  
That most rare love for which we pray;  
To India's temple-squatters teach  
The truth of the Islamic way."

(XXVII-2)

Otherwise, Sir Mohammed Iqbal tells his Maker that

"This life no more its joy retains,  
Nor even death can bring relief;  
'Tis sweet to sit alone and sigh  
And eat a sad heart out in grief."

(XXX-1)

I have tried to obtain the quintessence of Iqbal's *Jawab-i-Shikwa* which is capable of slaking the thirst

of the Indian Muslims for freedom, or for that undefinable something which is capable of giving them a pristine polity based upon the principle of *Dar-ul-Harab*, but I find that Allama Iqbal arraigns the Muslims of India, in a manner which far transcends his yearnings towards God, in terms of a calculated attack which, in parenthesis, convinces one of the manner in which the Indian Muslims have stuck their roots into the Indian soil, which certainly is indelible and for which there is no parallel in the long centuries of Islamic sojourn in various parts of the world. Here are the typical passages from his *Jawab-i-Shikwa*.

“Unto a nation Faith is life,  
You lost your faith and fell,  
When gravitation fails, must cease  
Concourse celestial.” (IX-2)

“From Christians you have learnt your style,  
Your culture from Hindoos;  
How can a race as Muslims pass  
Who shame even the Jews?” (XVII-2)

“Upon your nation’s sky you rose  
Like stars of brilliant hue,  
The lure of India’s idols made  
Even Brahmans out of you” (XXIII-1)

Earlier, Allama Iqbal posed the question:

“Should infidels like Muslims live  
The meed shall be the same?” (XII-2)

and finally rounded off with this exhortation:

“Thy shield be wisdom, be thy shord  
The flaming Love Divine,

My fond *Dervish!* dost thou not know  
That all the world is thine? (XXXVI-1)

From a purely rationalistic point of view, it is a trifle difficult for any patriotic Indian to comprehend fully the *rationale* behind Allama Iqbal's *Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa* in the light of the developments of the present century. But it is clear that when poetry gets mixed up with politics, and that too in an atmosphere of mysticism, the effect is bound to be terrific, so far as the modulation of the emotions of the people is concerned. To illustrate further the Westward yearnings of Indian Muslims, I must quote a passage from a private and confidential letter written by Sir Mohammed Iqbal to Mr. M. A. Jinnah on October 7, 1937, a few months before his death. Here is the relevant quotation.\* "The Palestine question is very much agitating the minds of the Muslims. We have a very fine opportunity for mass contact for the purposes of the League. I have no doubt that the League will pass a strong Resolution on this question, and also by holding a private conference of the leaders decide on some sort of a positive action in which masses may share in large numbers. This will at once popularise the League and may help the Palestine Arabs. Personally I would not mind going to jail on an issue which affects both Islam and India. The formation of a Western base on the very gates of the East is a menace to both."

There are, however, the usual contradictions in Iqbal's thought which the average Muslim mind can-

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\* Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah,—Introduction by Mr. M. A. Jinnah. (pp. 25-26)



not endorse even today. Here are two typical examples of the saga of frustration going through Iqbal's mind. In a letter to Mr. Jinnah on May 28, 1937, Iqbal said: "The problem of bread is becoming more and more acute. The Muslim has begun to feel that he has been going down during the last 200 years. *Ordinarily he believes that his poverty is due to Hindu money-lending or capitalism. The perception that it is equally due to foreign rule has not yet fully come to him. But it is bound to come.*" (*italic's mine.*)

Further down, Iqbal said with reference to the creation of a *Dar-ul-Islam* in this country: "But the enforcement and development of the *shareat* of Islam is impossible in this country without a free Muslim State or States." (*Ibid.* p. 16 ). But Sir Mohmmmed Iqbal gave away the whole case, when writing confidentially to Mr. Jinnah on June 21, 1937 he analysed the true causes of the so-called Hindu-Muslim conflict in our midst. Here are the relevant passages: "I tell you that we are actually living in a state of civil war which, but for the police and military, would become universal in no time..... I have carefully studied the whole situation [relating to the Hindu-Muslim tension in various parts of the country] and believe that the real cause of these events is neither religious nor economic. It is purely political. That is, the desire of the Sikhs and Hindus to intimidate Muslims even in the Muslim majority Provinces," (*Ibid.* page 19.)

I believe that what I have reproduced above is not intended for the sole purpose of taunting my

Muslim brethren in India with non-consistency, even in respect of the teaching of such an acknowledged leader of thought and religion as Sir Mohammed Iqbal, but it is obvious that Muslim thought in India from time to time, from the Wahabis of the last century to the Aligarh School of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and the now defunct Khilafat Movement, had got lost in the sands of a mystic yearning towards Moslem West, which always repudiated the claims and pretensions of Indian Islam, and ultimately got itself buried in the morass of the Two Nation Theory of *Quaide Azam* Jinnah. There is a fundamental contradiction or a series of contradictions in the thought and activity of the Indian Muslims these days. Either it is a deliberate coalescence with the interests of the British in India, or is at once a full search for solidarity with the Muslim nations of the West, which are more concerned with the development and flowering of their own racial nationalism, as represented by the Turks, the Arabs, the Egyptians, the Iraqis, the Iranians and the Afghans, than with the grandiloquent ideas held by Indian Muslims in favour of a central Muslim State, or even a loose federation of Muslim States for the whole world. I believe that Allama Iqbal was nearer the truth when, in his *Jawab-i-Shikwa*, he gave away the point that the Indian Muslim is far too much rooted into the earth of India than he even realises, with the result that he must recognise that to transplant himself into a *Dar-ul-Islam*, either to the East or the West of this country, must necessarily sound an impossible proposition.

No writer on *Pakistan*, and I believe I have consulted every writer on *Pakistan* in the English language, has ever cared to examine the exact sociological basis behind the polity and State in India both during the Muslim and the British periods. The *kaffir* and the *zimmi* were no doubt actually exterminated in the early days of what Dr. Ambedkar calls the "lumped-up series of Muslim invasions", but the *kaffir* and the *zimmi* proved to be far too stubborn for complete extermination in India. Forcible conversion and intermarriage have destroyed the blue blood of the Tartar, the Afghan and the Mogul, and it will be a curiosity today to discover and proclaim such blue blood among the Muslim of this country. The process of merger of the incoming Muslim hordes into the social fabric of this country has been so subtle and indelible that, apart from the preservation of their form of worship among the Muslims of this country, there is now hardly any vestige of the purity of blood or race theory which sustained the early Muslim conquests of the land.

On the contrary, as I have indicated earlier, the evolution of the *Din Ilahi* by Emperor Akbar goes to show the manner in which Muslim rulers of this country had sought to preserve the Muslim and Hindu subjects as co-sharers in the polity of the State, yoked together to the common task of preserving the country as a single whole.

People who talk of Islamic unity need not be reminded of the *Tabarra* and *Mahade-sahaba* which create the annual ugly scenes in Lucknow and other parts of the country these days. Though it is not

my purpose to preach the morality of the Hindu to the fellow Muslim citizens of this country, I would like to record here a few random facts and observations, the veracity of which cannot be disputed even by the most bigoted among the Muslim *Pakistanites* in our midst. His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad even today sends his annual tribute to the temple of Rama at Bhadrachalam in the Godavari Agency, and history shows that this historic temple which is famous for millions of Hindus had been lavishly endowed by the forbears of His Exalted Highness. There is caste among the Muslims of the Punjab. The Bengali Muslim cannot read Urdu, and even the Quran is, I suppose, read in the Bengali language. I have known Muslims in the South who wear the *kudumy*, and the Labbe of Karikal does perhaps read the *kalima* in terms of the Tamil script. The *sufis* are a powerful force which sought to bring about the commingling of all that is best in Islam and Hinduism, and today Kabir is worshipped as a saint alike by both the communities. One must go to the Moplah Muslim of Malabar to discover the niceties of Sanskrit idiom in the spoken language. And the Maharaja of Gwalior, in token of recognition by his State of the presence of Moslem citizens, annually participates in the *Tazia* processions. *Rag-Ragini* is a common heritage of Hindu and Muslim music, if ever such different things had existed in this country, and more Sanskrit flows out of a Muslim *ustad*, than Arabic from a Bengali Muslim who is expected to be one of the main pillars of *Pakistan* in this country.

The latest contribution to a dispassionate dis-

cussion of the *pros* and *cons* involved in the demand for *Pakistan* is made by Dr. Shaukat Ullah Ansari, one of the finest specimen of Muslim intellect and emotion we have today in our midst, and a public man of outstanding integrity (*PAKISTAN—The Problem of India*, 1944). He says (page 16): "In the East religion is considered not merely religion in the strict sense as understood in the West, but a complete social order which affects all the activities of life. In Islam and Hinduism, religion is the motive-spring of all the activities of life. In countries where the allegiance of people is divided on the basis of religion, the idea of territorial nationalism has never succeeded, such as between Jews and Christians in Germany, Muslims and Christians in Spain, Protestants and Catholics in Ireland, etc. *Islamic society and attitude to life is fundamentally different from those of Hindus. The conception of Indian Muslims as a nation may not be ethnically correct, but socially it is correct.*" (*Italics mine*). This, Dr. Ansari says, is the way in which a non-secessionist Muslim would like his case to be understood.

Stating the case of the secessionist, Dr. Ansari observes (p. 39): "Muslims believe that if a country is not under Muslim rule, in case of a conflict Muslims should obey Muslim law and defy the law of the land. They also believe that when the country is not under Muslim rule (Dar-ul-Islam) it is Dar-ul-Harb (abode of war). India, therefore, cannot be the land of Hindus and Muslims living as equals. Muslims must either perform *Hijrat* (as they attempt

ted in the middle of the 19th century and again in 1920), or turn *Dar-ul-Harb* into *Dar-ul-Islam* by *Jihad* (as they attempted in 1857, or Afghanistan attempted in 1919). Finally, they believe that there are no such things as territorial affinities, and affinities are really social and religious, both of which are extra-territorial, *i.e.* *pan-Islamism*." Proceeding, Dr. Ansari tries to show the incoherent and crude cravings of certain Muslims in India to have their link-up with the Islamic West. "The desire of the Indian Muslims to have a Muslim State of their own is a part of a movement for the unification of the Muslim World (*Silsila-i-Jamia-Vahdat-Umam-Islam*) started in Turkey during the lifetime and at the instance of the late Ataturk, under the patronage of the late Syed Jalil Ahmad Sinyusi. One of its aims is to create more Muslim republics in all those parts of the world which are predominantly Muslim States, in addition to Muslim States already functioning. Among the ten newly proposed republics, one is to consist of Muslim Bengal, another is to be constituted by the Muslim North-West India, and the third by the Hyderabad State" (p.47). The most curious aspect of this *Silsila-i-Jamia-vahdat-Umam-Islam* Movement is that even in the most ardent *Pakistanite* Muslim Indian State (*i.e.* of a Muslim Prince) today there is not the slightest possibility for the conversion of a *Darul-Harab* into a *Dar-ul-Islam* for use as a springboard for a Muslim onslaught on non-Muslim India, for the simple reason that the *millat* which is to be formed from out of *Dar-ul-Islam* is not integral but consists of important and even powerful groups of non-Muslims.

After stating the case of the *Pakistanites* with faithful correctness, Dr. Ansari shows up the untenable character of this separationist movement in our midst. He says that in the modern world the accent has shifted from religion to territorial nationalism, for the failure and incompatibility of a religious State for vast areas of the world, seeking to cut across territorial and even ethnic divisions, have become unmitigated facts. He says (pp.68-69): "To think that other Muslim countries will come to the aid of *Pakistan* to help them against the British is moonshine. Turkey is far off and has no desire to indulge in activities outside its borders. Egypt is equally far off, weak and impotent and enslaved by the British. Persia is dominated by the British and has no extra-territorial ambitions. Afghanistan is weak, lacks resources in men and materials and is incapable of giving any effective help even if the British permitted it to do so. If anything, Afghanistan would like to have access to the sea through the port of Karachi by annexing the whole of Baluchistan and Sindh. There is no Pan-Islamic sentiment left which would urge Muslim countries to come to the aid of *Pakistan*. Afghanistan is going to go the path of secularisation as Iran and Turkey have done, and all of them have enough to do within their own territories to have extra-territorial ambitions. Indian Muslims have only to recall the horrors of the Hijrat Movement during the Khilafat agitation to realise how empty Pan-Islamism proved and how unwelcome they were to the Afghans." Dr. Ansari conclusively proves the point that the

view of Indian Muslims for a Pan-Islamic Confederacy in the West is, to say the least, an utter impracticability.

Examining this "separatism conceived in a spirit of anger and fear and of revenge" and "this defeatist mentality" (p. 11) of Indian Muslims, Dr. Ansari faithfully examines "the peculiar mechanics of recent political conflict and turmoil", and comes to the conclusion that the present phase of Muslim attack on Hindus based upon the Two Nation theory "has no roots in the life of the people of this country and will disappear when the political impasse is solved, and the only thing to do now is not to allow this theory to distort the vision of the masses of India and to increase bitterness among the Hindus and the Muslims."

Taking this question of racial differences in our midst, Dr. Ansari says: "Inasmuch as racial differences exist in India, racially Hindus and Muslims of one province have greater affinity than Muslims of two provinces. For example, Hindus and Muslims of the Punjab are physically more akin to each other than Muslims of the Punjab and Muslims of Bengal or Madras or even the Frontier Provinces." He shows that "linguistically a Muslim Pathan is as alien to a Madrasi Muslim, as he is to a Russian across the border of India.....The popular identification of Urdu with Muslims and Hindi with Hindus is unwarranted, because linguistically India is definitely provincial and local.....Awans of the Punjab, though Muslims, retain Hindu names and keep their geneologies in the Brahmanic fashion....



...In the matter of marriages, certain Muslims follow Hindu customs and forms, and among some Muslims the Hindu law of marriage, guardianship and inheritance is applied....If Hindus bow down before an image of a deity, Muslims bow down before the graves of saints and Pirs. Music and dance are prohibited by Islam, but in some Khanqahs you hear sweet music and see elegant dancing.....Islam in India is an Arabic version of Sanatana Dharma, just as Sikhism and Arya Samaj are more or less Gurmukhi and Hindi editions of Islam.....Aligarh students are pro-British and anti-Hindu, but Deoband scholars are anti-British and pro-Congress (pp. 22-25).

Lord Durham might have said something about "two nations warring in the bosom of a single State" with reference to Canada, and the *Qaide Azam* might today try to wriggle out of a statement he gave to the same effect to Mr. Edward Thompson, but Dr. Ansari conclusively proves that the fundamental identity of interest of the Hindu and the Muslim cannot be disputed, and that the Islamic irredentist approach of some of the Mussalmans of India is not only irrational but is also not in the interests of the country. Mr. Durrani (*The Meaning of Pakistan*) states: "the continued residence of these Muslims in *Hindustan*, even if they are exposed there to undue hardships, is indispensable for the security and well-being of *Pakistan*, and existence of Hindu population will be harmful not only to *Pakistan* but also to the ultimate purposes of Islam."

Dr. Ansari shows the urgent need for a revised

synthesis in this country in the political and economic spheres which transcends all religious, sectional or provincial considerations. He says (p. 59): "Arabs are Muslims like the Turks, but they did not hesitate to co-operate with Britishers, who are Christians, to throw off the Turkish yoke. Religious conformity is one thing, identity of economic and political interests is another." He says, again, (p. 101): "War will be Nature's revenge on man for breaking up an organic whole. Partition cannot be carried out without conflict, separation cannot be maintained without friction, and in such an atmosphere no state can hope to achieve the ends it seeks to realize. To cure a wind we are calling a whirlwind."

Referring to some of the unanswered questions involved in the demand for *Pakistan* based upon religion, Dr. Ansari's analysis is illuminating. He says (pp. 86-87): "Before the demand for *Pakistan* can be accepted or supported by the future Pakistanis, they have a perfect right to know, what Mr. Jinnah consistently refuses to tell them, namely, what *Pakistan* has in store for them. Geographically what will *Pakistan* consist of? Will Ambala Division be excluded? Will Sikh areas be retained? Will Calcutta be included in the Eastern State? Will *Pakistan* be democratic (Mr. Jinnah has repeatedly said India is unfit for democracy), autocratic, socialistic, feudal or fascist? Will it be riddled with native States, or would those States be liquidated? What will be the rights of a citizen of *Pakistan*? What will be the duties of a citizen of

*Pakistan*? Will *Pakistan* be theocratic or temporal? What is meant by '*Hukumat-i-Ilahia*'? Since religion is the main reason for demanding *Pakistan*, presumably *Pakistan* will be a theocratic State. It is for the Muslims of the North-West to ask if they would like to live in a theocratic State. Would they be prepared to be ruled by Islamic law? Would they be ready to be purged of un-Islamic influence? Would they be prepared to give up all the influences they have developed by centuries of contact with non-Muslims? Would they be prepared to give up customary law? Would they be prepared to establish Bait-ul-Mal and regularly pay Zakaat? Would the Muslims of Sind, *i.e.* Khojas and Kuch Memons, give up Hindu law? Would the Punjab Muslims give up the protection of the Land Alienation Act? Would the Muslim landlords of the Punjab follow Shariah and share inheritance with their sisters, rather than follow the existing infidels' system? Would the landlords be willing to apply Shariah to agricultural land? Has not Choudhary Rahmat Ali warned: 'Bi-nationalism is only the first half of the movement's Fundamental Creed; they must, if they are in earnest, adopt also the other half—the de-Indianization of the *Millat's* territories. For only by its full adoption can the *Millat* be saved.' In absence of answers to these questions, every person paints the future in colours most attractive to himself, and draws from the resultant picture the enthusiasm of the converts. As it stands, *Pakistan* is negative, based on hate and fear rather than any constructive and

positive ideal or programme. Once Pakistan ceases to be a roseate and undefined ideal, it would at once lose its attraction for the millions who would then be obviously left out of its benefits or would not like to enjoy its benefits."

I must review here in some detail the *pan*-Islamic approach of Indian Muslims to their religious and political problems. Just as triumphant Japanese victory over Russia at the dawn of the present century gave a tremendous fillip to the Indian nationalist movement, developments in the Muslim countries of the Near East came to thoroughly influence the progress of the Muslim community of this country during the past half a century. The fortunes of the Ottoman Empire naturally supplied the motive force for Muslim activity in India, which is capable of slaking the thirst of Indian Muslims for the preservation of Islamic culture wherever it existed, that is to say either in India or abroad, and also to consolidate their position in the politics of this country. Indian Muslims thoroughly resented the shabby treatment meted out by the Western Powers, particularly the British, to the Sick Man of Europe. But when the Young Turks sought to upset the *regime* of the Caliph in Turkey in 1908, the Indian Muslims did not recognise the futility of the *pan*-Islamic approach to national and international problems as affecting their own position in India. The most curious thing was that, while the Turks themselves were eager to destroy all the fungus surrounding Islamic tradition both in the religious and the secular spheres, the Indian Muslims

sought to move in exactly the opposite direction, and even had the audacity to claim to set things right, even with reference to Turkey and other countries in the Near East. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and the late Maulana Mohamed Ali, started papers in Calcutta, Lahore and Delhi in order to quicken the *tempo* of Muslim thought and to revive interest in the *pan*-Islamic movement, which was responsible for the despatch of the Red Crescent Mission under the leadership of the late Dr. M. A. Ansari in 1912, in order to relieve the distress among the Turkish troops involved in the Balkan wars.

The outbreak of the last Great War and the deliberate manner in which British Imperialism wrought the destruction of the Ottoman Empire, though profoundly upset the Muslim position in India, spurred the Indian Muslims into an effort which was capable of becoming a huge concourse with that of the fellow non-Muslim citizens, for the destruction of the incubus of foreign domination over the country for long decades. The dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, as a result of the Treaty of Sevres, resulting in the resignation of the late Edwin Montagu as a protest against the disinclination of His Majesty's Government to respect the feelings of the Muslims of the country, need not be recounted here in any great detail. The late Maulana Mohamed Ali returned from his deputation to England after the *Khilafat* Movement gained a tremendous momentum in this land, bringing the Muslim and the Hindu together into an

effort of terrific force to be hurled against Britain, resulting, in the process, in the unleashing of forces of repression by the Government. The late Mustafa Kemal Pasha, still to become the *Ghazi* and the Atatürk, secured the deposition in November 1922 of Emperor Abdul Hamid II, and put in Abdul Majid in his place as Caliph with only temporal powers. These world-shaking events in Turkey very naturally knocked the bottom out of the position of Indian Muslims, and the All-India *Khilafat* Conference, which met along with the Congress at Cöcanada in December 1923, resolved to send to Turkey a *Khilafat* Delegation for the purpose of remonstrating with Mustafa Kemal Pasha and for urging the view-point of Indian Muslims with reference to the future of the *jazirat-ul-Arab* question. The British Government was particular in not permitting all the delegates chosen to go to Turkey, and the curious spectacle of a Shia and a Khoja, *e. g.*, the late Amir Ali and His Highness the Aga Khan, protesting against the Turkish *Ghazi*, resulted from these movements. Cantwell Smith says (p. 239): "The Turkish Ghazi was irate to see men like Amir Ali and His Highness the Aga Khan approaching him on the subject of the Turkish and the Islamic constitutions; he pointed out with some scorn their intimate and friendly relations with British Imperialism, even during the recent war against the Ottoman Empire, and their heresy. It really was rather ludicrous to have a Shia and a Khojah telling the Turkish Muslims how to behave. It was also fanciful for

men who were pillars of British rule in India to advise Turkish nationalism on policy. On March, 3, 1924, the people of Turkey exiled Abdul Majid and abolished the Khalifah altogether."

The establishment of a secular state in Turkey, which had taken the wind out of the sails of the *pan*-Islamic proclivities of Indian Muslims, did not prevent them from continuing to look Westwards, in a manner which would hardly ever be reciprocated by their fellow co-religionists of the countries concerned. The Indian *Khilafat* Committee had something to do with the Wailing Wall Commission relating to the deplorable incidents in Palestine, resulting from the conflict between the Arab and the Jew, as a result of the Balfour Declaration setting up a national home for international Jews in Palestine as against the pressing and legal claims of the Arabs. The Indian *Khilafat* Committee was responsible for the convocation of the Islamic Congress at Jerusalem in December 1931, but the late Maulana Shaukat Ali, who was the leading spirit of this movement, came back disillusioned at the fact that that Congress had turned out to be more Arab in complexion than Islamic in approach to the problems of Muslims wherever they are to be found. It is regrettable that with their beings rooted into the Earth in India, the Indian Muslims never ceased thinking about a *pan*-Islamic Federation or Confederation of States from Morocco to Korea, even though strong nationalistic states of Muslim races in the West have always struggled to resist any such federation or confederation among themselves.

The utter futility of the *pan*-Islamic approach of the Muslims in India was demonstrated at the time of the abdication of King Amanulla in Afghanistan and the abdication of King Raza Shah Pehlavi in Persia (now Iran), and more recently still with the series of developments which took place in Iran and Iraq leading to the diminution of sovereignty of these States as a result of British and even Soviet domination of the lands. It is true that Indian Muslims had protested, and protested very vehemently, against all this, very much as the non-Muslim Indians did in like cases which secured the destruction of the liberties of the non-White peoples of the world, but the question is whether these Indian Muslim protests were even appreciated to the extent desired or deserved by Muslims in Near Eastern countries. Even during the present international War, the Near Eastern countries could not have enough inducement to summon their Islamic relations in India to unite and to offer a solid phalanx of opposition to the exploiting activities of foreign Imperialism, particularly British and American. The liberation of Palestine and Syria are still to be secured. Iran and Iraq have had their sovereignties, which were recently obtained, diminished by the march of events during the past six years. The sovereignty of Egypt is still a nebulous proposition, and the "Canal Capitulations" are still there. The problems of the Arabian States are in the melting pot. Afghanistan is still trying to preserve the position of a precarious buffer between the rival Imperialisms represented by Britain and the U.S.S.R.



I have no desire to belittle the complexities and the national and international problems of these countries, but it is an undeniable fact that the question of a *Jazirat-ul-Arab* for Islam has completely receded into the background. No patriotic Indian would have any difficulty with his fellow-Muslim brethren, in so far as the preservation of the places of worship dedicated to the sacred memory of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon Him) and the preservation of the right to approach to these holy places are concerned. But the question remains that, while the fusion of the Turk and the Arab, of the Iranian and the Afghan, leaving aside the complexities of language, into a political state based upon religion, or rather a theocratic polity going back to the system of the Omayyads and the Caliphs, is a problem which has been resisted in Ankara, Cairo, Baghdad, Teheran and Kabul, it is unthinkable that the linking up of a future theocratic Muslim State in India, or a series of theocratic Muslim States in our midst, with these reluctant Turkish, Afghan, Arab, Persian, Egyptian nationalisms is a proposition which can come within the range of practical achievement. Turkey has valiantly sought to maintain her neutrality in the most excruciating circumstances of the six years of the present hostilities, and succeeded in maintaining that neutrality. But Turkey did not raise her little finger when the Allied troops marched into Syria for security reasons, even securing in the process the destruction of Syrian nationalism for the time being, or in Iraq and Iran where the Allied and Soviet penetration became an

accomplished fact in order that the German onrush to the Arabian Sea was prevented. If any lesson is derived from the logic of contemporary events, it is that a sentimental internationalism based upon the remote tie of blue-blood, which some Indian Muslims claim alongside of the Arab and the Turk, or on the sanctified basis of religion itself, had long since ceased to be the basic foundation of the State (example Turkey during the present century), either nationally or internationally in Islam. There is no question that the Muslims of China, or for that matter in other South East Asian countries, would ever succeed in having a theocratic state for themselves, even in clearly defined areas in which they constitute the majority population.

This, at any rate, is the verdict of history with reference to the heroic fortunes of Islam, but, as I have stated earlier, this does not mean that Indian Muslims should not cultivate feelings of a fellowship of religion wherever Islam exists. Islam is imperishable, and has a way of life and a code of brotherhood which transcends in certain respects the teachings of some other religions, but it is arguable, and it is argued here, that the preservation of Islam is not inconsistent with the preservation of a secular State in a country like India, where ninety million Muslims find themselves living side by side with vaster millions of non-Muslims in a grand *regime* of demographic dispersion over a great sub-continent. Unless all the Muslims of India are gathered together and transplanted to a piece of territory which can become that *Dar-ul-Islam*, there is no question of the

country being conquered by any theocratic State. Even assuming that this colossal exchange of population by religion takes place, it is not clear whether a theocratic State will survive in terms of the forces of the XX century, as we know them today, or as we are likely to face them tomorrow.

The recent efforts of Islamic countries in favour of the evolution of the *pan*-Islamic concept have, unless I misread contemporary world history, not fructified to the extent one had visualised or planned for. I have already referred to the disillusionment of Indian Mussalmans who returned back to the Mother Country without finding an asylum in Afghanistan, where they had gone during the *Khilafat* days to coalesce themselves with their fellow Muslim Afghans, fondly seeing the emergence in the modern world of a *Dar-ul-Islam*, simply because economic and even racial factors supervened and made a merger of Indian and Afghan Muslims almost impossible. During the inter-war period, the idea of *pan*-Islamic solidarity has been mooted on more than one occasion, sometimes under the leadership of His Majesty Ibn Suad of Arabia and sometimes under the *aegis* of the late King Feisal of modern Iraq, while the reigning monarchs of modern Egypt and Iran also put forward a considerable amount of effort in order that their neighbouring Muslim Kingdoms and States might merge themselves into something like an Islamic *Zollverein*. I believe that Turkey under the *Ghazi* Mustafa Kemal consistently set her face against the revival of anything approaching the old Caliphate, in the light

of the disastrous national experience of the Ottomans which resulted in the abdication of both the Caliph and the Emperor, and led to the formation of a secular republic, even though it is recognised that this great Muslim leader was most anxious, after the consolidation of his country into a strong and purposeful State, which is capable of standing itself against the onslaughts of the rival Imperialisms to the East and West, to bring into some sort of a co-operative conclave the half a dozen or so of States which once formed the basis of Ottoman Empire, and which in his lifetime constituted themselves into independent or semi-independent States, more or less under the protecting wing of British Power.

I do not think there were many claimants to the august office of the Caliph after the abdication of Emperor Abdul Hamid II during the inter-war period, but I think it is more or less an approximation to facts if I say that, at any rate, during the period of the present international hostilities, there was a faint semblance to the recrudescence of feeling among Islamic nations and peoples for the evolution of something like a religious headship for Islam all over the world. I also believe that even if Turkey is not willing to give asylum to this idea for a second time in her national and international history, there are many a devout Muslim, not only in India but also in other parts of the world where Islam exists, who would like to have a vicegerent Caliph in a place like Cairo, which has already its world-famous *Al-Azahar* University. The recent effort of Mustafa Nahas Pasha,

who successfully convened a *pan*-Arab Conference in Cairo, at which representatives of almost all the independent Muslim States of the Middle and Near East were present, cost him unfortunately his Premiership of Egypt, simply because Britain and even the U.S.A. were unwilling to stand as mute spectators of a politically consolidated Islam, even if this consolidation of States did not have the faintest resemblance to a politico-theocratic merger within the framework of the well-known concept of the Caliph and the Sultan, which, as I have said earlier, seems to be almost an impossibility in the face of the individual nationalisms of the various Islamic races of the world. I have no doubt that as long as Islam persists as a virile and purposeful religion effort would be continued towards its international consolidation, whether it be in terms of an outright revival of the vicegerency of a devout Muslim on behalf of God on Earth, or if this is not possible in terms of an attempt towards securing Islamic consolidation, meaning thereby the bringing together in a myriad ways of Muslims the world over into a co-operative partnership, which is capable of preserving unto Islam the strength and purposiveness which alone can withstand the onslaughts of the non-Islamic peoples either from the East or from the West.

As an Indian and a Hindu I have shared with genuine feeling the sorrows of the Islamic peoples of the Near and Middle East, whether it be in terms of the disastrous efforts of the Anglo-American oil Imperialism in Iraq and Iran, the Jewish

national home policy with reference to Palestine, the denial of freedom to the peoples of Syria by Metropolitan France of liberty, equality and fraternity fame, the continued existence of "canal capitulations" with reference to the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 and, even for that matter, the denial of political and economic freedom to millions of Muslims in the Malay Archipelago and in the Dutch East Indies. A strong and united India of the future would not escape its responsibility for extending fellowship to these and other Muslim peoples, particularly those who are consigned to the status of serfs even in the XX century in various parts of the Dark Continent, though, as I have said in my book *"Nationalism and Self-Sufficiency"*, there may not be any disposition on the part of India to intervene in the domestic political problems of these and other countries in the world, simply because Indian freedom, even if won, must be retained unsullied for all time. The presence in India of ninety million Muslims is a guarantee of the good-will and fellowship of India naturally flowing out towards the hundreds of millions of Muslims wherever they exist, either to the East or to the West, from Korea to Morocco. However, extending fellowship and using India's national good offices is one thing, and a political or a semi-political merger into an integral State is another. It is also a fact that, in the fullness of time, when the colossal struggle which I visualise between Imperialism and its wards begins, India, by virtue of her resources and man-power, might have to fight in the cause of the

liberation of the suppressed peoples of the world.

A strong and united India is a guarantee that Islam abroad would receive the greatest possible assistance from 400 million people, of whom just about a quarter are Muslims. The dismemberment of India, even as an idea of the political game, would produce exactly the reverse of this prospect, and I for one have not even the least desire to contribute anything to the controversies concerning the *Sunni*, the *Shia* and the *Momin*, not to speak of several other denominations of Indian Mussalmans, which have been unfortunately raked up by some of the attackers of the *Pakistan* idea these days. Contemporary history in India has shown that these distinctions among the Muslims have been given an extraordinary emphasis, which is not in the interests of Islam and which is also not in the interests of India. I would deprecate very sincerely any recrudescence of further trouble as between the *Sunni*, the *Shia* and the *Momin*, not because I have any right to enter into the theological or sociological approaches to these disputes, but because of the simple point that the interests of India demand the destruction of centrifugal tendencies wherever they are likely to rear their heads, that is to say, whether it is among the Hindus or the Muslims. There cannot be a greater curse to this country than her dismemberment into a *Sikhistan*, a *Dravidistan* a *Sunnistan*, a *Shiastan* or a *Moministan*. For ought I know, if this mad pattern for India is to emerge from out of the shambles of the present communal discussions, the Bhils of Central India might as well

have a kingdom for themselves, as much as the Santhals to the East, simply because they worship the Elements in a manner which they might claim to be different from the traditional forms of Hinduism or Islam. Once India tends to break up into these territorial bits on the basis of religion or the lack of it, I am afraid there would be no security for Hinduism or for Islam either within the confines of this country as we know it now, or, for that matter, even with reference to their existence abroad.

A strong and united India is feasible even in the midst of these so-called fratricidal wars of the politicians of this land, and I have not the least doubt that it can be brought into existence from out of the major struggles pending between the people of this country and those of Britain in the near future. I am not a constitution maker, but in the next section of this book I hope I will be able to demonstrate the feasibility of a secular constitution for India, in which all the religions of the land find their strength through their guaranteed preservation without detriment to each other. It would be a proud day for every Indian, whether he be a Christian, Hindu, or Muslim, when this unity, which is born out of a secular conformity to a territorial system of politics, becomes a fact. It would also be a proud day for Britain when she seeks willingly to achieve the fulfilment of her "mission" in our midst, by providing for a scheme of things in which the Hindu and the Muslim do not fly at each other, but work towards securing the achievement of their country's freedom and its—preservation.



## BOOK II

### THE CITADEL OF CITIZENSHIP

The primary need in India today is the inculcation of the idea of citizenship into the lives and beings of 400 million people who, thanks to long centuries of slavery, have almost completely forgotten what belongs to them or what ought to belong to them in terms of their places in the community and the State. I believe there is no country in the world in which the *ma-bap* attitude of the citizen (meaning thereby that he or **BACK TO THE PANCHAYAT** she looks to the Government as a retribution-bestowing parent) has become such a degrading fine art as it is in this country. In my time I have investigated the social and political conditions of nearly two dozen countries both in the West and in the East, and I have never, when conversing with the people of those countries and trying to understand their problems of life and living, come across that painful feeling, which I feel every day in my own country impinging upon me and my fellow men, to the effect that the State is the exploiter and the citizen the exploited; that the State is the police which benumbs us into submission and not the servant of the community; that the State is there not as the fulfilment of the emotional and political being of myself and my fellows, but is the embodiment of that indefinable system of coercion and extortion in which we have

no place based upon our volition and our willing acquiescence in its approach to the problems of the individual and the community.

Indeed, having been reared on the ancient texts of the Hindus and the Muslims which laud to the sky the essential virtues of the King, both Hindu and Muslim, in terms of his responsibilities to the community and also in terms of the fulfilment of his vicegerency of God on Earth (which no longer obtains in our midst), and having drunk deep at the fountain of western democratic ideas, I have always felt the utter futility of the citizen of India clinging to his religion both as a private and public citadel, simply because he was and is unable as yet to make the State the subservient tool for the enlargement of his liberty. Writing twenty years ago, the late Edwin Montagu, a former Secretary of State for India who was a pronounced Westerner, having a peep into the administration of India which was carried on in his name and in the name of his country and his King, came to the conclusion that it was wooden, iron and ante-diluvian, and I am afraid Montagu's verdict is only an approximation to the truth prevailing in this country. I do not think that anybody has as yet attempted to dissect the system of things prevailing in this country in relation to the individual, the community and the State, in that empirical manner which alone can help us towards understanding the basic realities of their being and future. But I have no doubt that if any such attempt is to be made and carried out, there is bound to be stark horror at the realisation

of the fact that the individual and the community, in their relationship with the State, have sunk so low, as are almost unable to rise to the realisation of their rights and duties to themselves, to their country and to the world at large.

I have watched and have taken a significant outsider's part in many an election to the community *Panchayat*, the Local Board, the Trade Union, and the Provincial and Central Legislatures, always detaching myself away from the crowd. I have always felt the need for the constituent to recognise the fact that he is the master in which the sovereignty of the State finds itself ultimately embedded. I do not think I am giving expression to this feeling in order to help *Quide Azam* Jinnah to find another opportunity for telling himself and the world that democracy is not suited to the people of this country, if only but doing so he might try to obtain an additional point in favour of *Pakistan*, because I know that the *Quide Azam* himself has indulged in a *volte face* and declared that his projected *Pakistan* is to be democratic in character, for he realises that he could no longer evade the hot pursuit of criticism from friend and foe behind him, alike in India and outside India. What has struck me at the time when Mr. Jinnah voted for democracy for his future communal kingdoms (having earlier held "deliverence day demonstrations" when Congress laid down office on the ground of the country's quarrel with Britain, which made us co-belligerents even without so much as consulting us), was that if democracy is possible on a smaller

territorial basis, within the meaning of the *Pakistan* States in which there are to be powerful minorities of Hindus and Sikhs, it must necessarily be possible in terms of the country as a whole. But I digress.

The genius of the Indian from times immemorial had been and continues to be democratic and, curiously enough, there are recorded instances of the republican approach to the organisation of the affairs of the community and the State. It might be historically correct to say that the village *Panchayat*, both of the ancients and of the moderns in this country, might have been a projection of the original patriarchal grouping of people into organised units for purposes of administration. But the *Panchayat* in ancient India had been a purely democratic body which cut across even the rigid boundaries of caste. The Buddhist *Sangha* is perhaps the greatest gift which the religion of the Gautama had given to the country, and it is a demonstrable fact that the flourish of Buddhism in India, before and after the birth of Christ, had been responsible for the further consolidation of the democratic ethic in our midst. Students of history recall the existence, despite the prevailing grip of the monarchical idea in ancient India, of a series of republics in which people lived, side by side, and with each other, in terms of a co-operative system of regional governance of the country, and I for one cannot imagine a republic functioning without it being democratic. The percolation of Islamic ideas and religion into the nook and corner of the country had, in the process of a thousand years, further

strengthened the democratic organisation of the community, though in terms of the serried plan of occupational-distribution of work, and the *Panchayat* in India today, however much submerged in terms of the established law-courts of the British Government, is a common heritage of both the Hindu and the Muslim.

If today the *Panchayat* system is not as efficient as it was in ancient times and as it could have been, it is only because of the fact that the community and the State have lagged behind and have not given it the emphasis and importance which is its due. The Muslim contribution to the evolution of the democratic ideal, even in terms of world history, had been fundamental and continues to remain fundamental, as long as the congregational aspect of Muslim worship, making it possible for countless millions of Muslim worshippers to bend their knees in unison at stated times of the day and all the year round in a common obeisance westwards to Holy Mecca, is there, there is no question that anything other than a democratic form of Government is possible for this country. I wish to maximise the fact that Islam in India, as Islam in any other part of the world, is a disciplined religion, enveloping human activity in a manner far more comprehensive than that of some other religions in the world. It is my argument that the secular, democratic organisation of the community and the State is not incompatible with the preservation of the spiritual foundations of Islam, in so far as they regulate the life and living of the spiritual followers of the Holy

Prophet (Peace be on Him). If alone there is that desirable confluence, which has so far been rendered nugatory by the common masters of the Hindus and the Muslims in this country, *viz.*, the Britishers ruling over us during the past two centuries, of the innate democratic tendencies of Hinduism and Islam, it is my conviction that a secular State for India could be formed and sustained as an organic approach to the problems of four hundred million people, who are first to gain their freedom and then to retain it in terms of a world organisation, in which the common, combined strength of people within defined territories, in comparison with the comparable strength of similar communities elsewhere, guarantees to them the right of survival.

The problem of democracy is a problem of the management of the crowd by the individual who belongs to it and by the State which bases its structure on it. The managing of the crowd in any context and in any country is ordinarily difficult in itself, whether it be in terms of the dirt track race at Brookwood, the communal Pentangular in the Brabourne Stadium, the Maha Kumbh Mela at the *Sangam* or the *Id* prayers on the *maidan* in Calcutta. The crowd in the mass has the unenviable attribute of the sheep, *viz.* the acquisition of leadership without even so much of a semblance of continuous consultation between the leader and the led. Two decades ago I felt slightly exultant at having coined a sentence which ran like something as follows: "he that wants to lead must himself learn to know what it is to be led." Such a

slogan is certainly the equivalent of the clap-trap of an ordinary demagogue in terms of the political organisation both in the East and in the West. But the inter-war period in my country has convinced me that it is high time that the mere man comes soon into his own, and realises the callousness of our masters and the utter lack of ethics in the leadership which has, in the ultimate analysis, come to invade him and his rights, whether it be that of the Hindu or the Muslim, Congress or the League, or, for that matter, the Christian synod or *Akhand Hindustan*.

I have felt extremely distressed watching many an election in which the mere man, that is to say the voter, was led into a certain type of decision regarding the registration of his vote, most times on the basis of the clap-trap of a slogan and, to a significant extent, as the result of the unloosening of the purse-strings of the local leaders of the community who have made sure that the crowd follows the bait of the equivalent of bread which it so very badly needs. Indeed, as a detached observer of the system or systems of electioneering in India, I was all these years weighed down with the feeling that the sooner the mere man and the mere woman are educated in terms of the obligations of citizenship, the better it is for all concerned. I am sure I would be exposing myself to the unthinking charge that I am an irresponsible writer, but I believe it is my duty to record here with truth and conviction that the amount of corruption which has entered the public life of the land is so enormous, that even legislation by a future National Government to eradicate it will become

initially unequal to its task, and that the education of the individual in the stern school of citizenship alone can possibly help in putting the politician and the leader in their proper places as servants of the community and the State, and not as their masters. When it is remembered that Indian society is cut up artificially into so many *blocs*, which find their motive power in the peculiar caste mark, the peculiar tilt and hue of the turban or, for that matter, in the peculiar niceties of the approach between man and his Maker in terms of institutional religion, it is obvious that the problem of politics and social organisation in India today and tomorrow become terrific, and require super-human efforts which alone can clear the Augean stables of the incubus of centuries of foreign domination, the system of political spoils enforced upon us by our masters, and the demoralising influence of the group of demagogues who have taken hold of the public life of the country. Communalism has definitely run rampant in our midst, and until communalism is wiped out it is not possible for the State or the mere man in the street to guarantee that the life of the individual, the community and the State, jointly and severally, become purged of the deleterious consequences of a system of political organisation, in which the political leader and the functionary of Government rule the roost, leaving the devil to take the hindmost.

The problem of citizenship in India is necessarily the problem of the poising of the so-called divergent and conflicting interests of the community which, in particular, our British masters have been careful



to din into our ears all these two hundred years of their domination over our community. **JOINT ELECTO-  
RATES WITH  
WEIGHTAGE** The communal schisms, which our masters have created and sustained with a horrible system of political spoils during the two centuries of the loss of our freedom, have unfortunately come to pollute even the pristine springs of the *Panchayat* type of organisation in the sylvan surroundings of rural India. The poison has obviously entered the system, the purging of which is a task which is as difficult as it is necessary if we are to survive as a people and a country.

As long as separate electorates continue to exist in our midst, it is clear that this poison cannot be purged. Democracy and parliamentary government are in the ultimate analysis the product of the distillation of a oneness of approach between man and man to the problems of their life and living, and as long as the individual in the land does not recognise the particular need for the rubbing off of his angularities in common interest, which he must necessarily cherish as an individual, and accept the principle of give and take for himself on the one hand and for his fellows on the other (even in terms of the so-called Hindu-Muslim complex on which an unjustifiable amount of premium is put these days by our rulers and the communally minded politicians), it is impossible for the individual in India and his fellows to strive to secure a system of things in which they will have the opportunity for the fullest possible type of expression, and for the country to which he belongs to find its fulfilment

in terms of freedom and stability, and if the destruction of separate electorates, meaning thereby the merciless stamping out from within our midst of the virus of differentiation between man and man on the so-called basis of religion into which they are born, is not secured. Religion is a personal obligation between man and his Maker, but if it is accepted and discharged for the benefit of communities and States, there cannot be any guarantee that we in India would continue to survive as a people, in respect either of our national interests or of our international obligations.

In my time as a public worker, I have attempted to make a thorough investigation of the manner in which separatism has come to eat into our very life and being, and I do not think I am dishonest when I say that it is the sedulous manner in which the British Occupation of India which is responsible for the continued preservation in our midst of the disastrous communal vote. I need not detain myself here with a detailed examination of the manner in which the ruling power kept up an insistent drive towards telling the Hindus and the Muslims of this country that they are two separate entities, and it is time that the fullest possible exposure is made of the British responsibility for this schism. As one who had hovered round the first and second Round Table Conferences in London, and also as one who had watched with grief and even horror the manner in which Britain sought to dissemble the assembled delegates from this country and to prevent an agreement being reached on the so-called communal

question, even on the basis of the famous blank cheque given by Mahatma Gandhi to the minorities at the time of the second Round Table Conference, I can write almost a volume on the sordid story of the defeat of Indian representatives struggling to reach an agreement in London. But for our present purpose, I am privileged to reproduce the relevant portions of the last political testament of Maulana Mahomed Ali, revealing in brief but lurid detail the manner in which even the late Ramsay MacDonald, that much-vaunted Labourite Premier and friend of India, shut out the late Maulana Saheb and others from making their contribution to the solution of the communal question, contrived later to secure the break-up of the second Round Table Conference without agreement among the assembled Indian delegates, and created the conditions for the issuance of his infamous Communal Decision (mis-called Communal Award) which today forms the basis of Provincial Autonomy in such of the Provinces where it exists, as also the foundation on which the Federal portion of the Constitution Act of 1935, which is not inaugurated as yet, rests.

The first Indian National Congress I ever attended was that presided over by the late Maulana Mohamed Ali, when I went up to Cocanada in 1923 as a student delegate to the student wing of the Congress, and I even today recall the sensation created by the lofty patriotism of this true son of India who, along with the Big Brother, the late Maulana Shaukat Ali, was earlier the trusted collaborator of Mahatma Gandhi in the inauguration and

fulfilment of the *Khilafat* Movement in this land. In later years, the late Maulana Mohamed Ali, obviously out of a sense of frustration at the lack of independence for this country, betrayed tendencies which must, in terms of any historical analysis, be characterised as communalist, and it was he who coined the famous slogan, "A corridor for Muslims from Karachi to Calcutta." But the pilgrim's progress towards freedom and unity later emerged from out of his conscience which the late Maulana Mohamed Ali could not forget, and it was he who went up to London and declared at the time of the first Round Table Conference that he would not return to India until the country's freedom was won. Maulana Mohamed Ali died in London without obtaining the freedom of India. The letter, from which I am privileged to quote, represents his last, though temporarily futile, effort to save the communal-minded politicians, who were herded together in the Round Table Conferences, set at each other's throats by the skilful diplomacy of the India Office, and prevented from reaching an agreement on the communal question. The following are the relevant extracts from his letter, and a photostat reproduction of the same, which, owing to the thinness of the paper on which the late Maulana Mohamed Ali wrote his letter and the lack of care in its preservation, does not unfortunately give a very clear reproduction:

"....Now I come to the work. The federal Structure Committee, which is the most important and fundamental, and the Provincial Autonomy Com-

mittee the importance of which was also undoubted, have had to slow down their work this week because it was impossible to go on without settling the Hindu-Muslim problem. Everywhere this was bound to crop up, and so the Prime Minister collected together one afternoon in the Committee Room a few Hindus and a few Mussalmans and began to press for a settlement among the delegates of the two communities. Jayakar promptly suggested that the Prime Minister should become the arbitrator. This is the kind of thing that these people have been doing all along. They insist on their dirty linen being washed before others; they know well enough that by proposing someone as arbitrator they flatter his vanity and might succeed in making him a partisan, and the idea of referring the matter to the League of Nations had evidently a good foundation, and was their own. Jinnah promptly intervened and said arbitration would make the Prime Minister's position very invidious and naturally the Prime Minister agreed. The Mussalmans, however, suggested that he could try for a settlement as conciliator, which he agreed to do so. Hindus and Mussulmans selected some 10 representatives each, the Hindus including the three Mahasabhaites and the Liberals.

"When the Mussulmans met to decide what should be their terms, the great leaders, as usual, began to wobble and Shaukat was compelled at long last to pitch into them. Then he came to me at about 8 at night and said the Muslim delegates were meeting in the Ritz in the Aga Khan's rooms, and that he felt I would be needed to make them

come to a definite decision once and for all. So in spite of my oedema which made walking almost an impossibility and in spite of the cold and foggy night, so bad for my cough, I decided to go there, and wrapping myself up in my leather coat and my warmest *Aba* and muffler I sallied forth in a taxi and joined that galaxy of great intellects and greater devotion to duty and self-sacrifice. As I have mentioned before, the worst of the lot are the two Delegates of Bengal. The Punjab also began to wobble and it had seemed that both were anxious to follow Fazl-i-Husain's\* lead and accept the Government of India's Dispatch Proposals. With us the difficulty was that in Bengal, even more than in the Punjab, we doubted if any Government would give the Mussulmans the reservation of seats in the whole Legislature in accordance with the proportion of the population. In the Punjab, the Sikhs had made the situation involved; but in Bengal it was the Europeans, and it was obvious the Europeans could not be made to surrender the weightage they had hitherto enjoyed. Nevertheless it was decided that we must press on both these Provinces for reservation of seats in accordance with the proportion of population though, without confessing it even to ourselves, we thought it probable that a part of our small majority would have to be surrendered to the Sikhs in the Punjab and to the Europeans in Bengal. But we would certainly never, never, surrender the majority in these provinces, and allow it to be converted into a minority as the Government of India Dispatch has done in Bengal. Once more,

\*The late Sir Fazl-i Husain,

the Bengal Delegates would have preferred the conversion of their majority into a minority, provided that separate electorates were maintained. Against this I argued energetically and showed how with my formula of conditional mixed electorates we could make ourselves secure from the Communalism of the majority community and at the same time kill all Communalism, that of the minority as well as that of the majority. My formula was that seats should be reserved in Bengal and the Punjab in accordance with the proportion of population and in each of the minority provinces in accordance with the present proportion, that is to say together with the weightage enjoyed, and in the reformed Frontier and the separated Sind in accordance with the proportion to be settled here, (*sic*) in which we would give the Hindus even better weightage than we enjoyed in our minority provinces. But no candidate should be declared elected unless he secures 40% of the votes of those who have voted out of his own community, and 5% or 10% as may be fixed of the votes of those who have voted out of other communities in that election. If no candidate secures both these minima, then only the votes cast by the members of his own community should be counted. In other words, it would become a separate electorate, but unlike separate electorates it gives a chance to true Nationalists also to compete against communal fanatics. In any case, candidates have to go cap in hand to all the communities and therefore cannot indulge in the vile abuse of sister communities that goes on today because candidates are in-

dependent of the suffrage of sister communities and try to outbid each other in winning the suffrage of their own community by the abusing of sister communities.

“This formula also makes it impossible for the majority community to set up men of straw from among the minority community or even pseudo-converts (*viz.* some Aryas) to Islam and return them with its own votes as representatives of the minority community whose votes they cannot secure. But my formula has given preference to a man who secures the largest number of votes, including votes of sister communities, even though another candidate secures more votes of his own community but is unpopular with the sister communities, and therefore secures a smaller aggregate. In other words, this formula has all the checks and balances needed to crush Communalism of the majority community as well as of the minority community, while an ordinary joint electorate leaves the minority community at the tender mercy of the majority community, and while the separate electorate encourages communal fanaticism and discourages Nationalism.

“It is all very well where, like in the Punjab and Bengal, the Frontier and Sind, we are in a majority to have separate electorates. But separate electorates in provinces where we are in a minority, although they make it certain that we can get in some of our *real* representatives whom we cannot return in the ordinary joint electorates, make it also certain that the majority community must also return candidates like our own who are combative rather than concili-



liatory, and since it is not a third person as in a law court who is the judge that must decide which advocate has pleaded the right cause, but the two sets of advocates have to do it themselves by voting, the party that has more advocates wins, and the party with few advocates loses. It is the minority that suffer.

“Well, with the exception of Ghuznavi<sup>1</sup>, who is a Government man out and out, they all came round; even Fazl-ul Haq said, since the Hindus of Bengal would never accept this there was no harm in our willingness to have this formula in a joint electorate, so as to throw the blame of refusal on the Hindus instead of taking it on ourselves. We could only disperse after 1 O'clock that night, and you can imagine the condition of my heart and mind after so much excitement and work.

“Next day we went to 10, Downing Street and much gas was let out for two hours with hardly any result, except Sapru's<sup>2</sup> warmhearted attack on the cant of those who made cheap appeals in the name of Nationalism. I pointed out in reply to Narendra Nath<sup>3</sup>, who made no less than a dozen speeches along with Moonje<sup>4</sup> who must have made 9 or 10, that when Hindus talk of being in a minority in the Punjab they did not make it clear to the Prime Minister that while their majorities were from about 72% in Assam to 96% in C.P., our majorities were only 55 and 56 per cent in Bengal and Punjab where we could afford to give any body any weightage, but

1. Sir Abdul Halim Ghuznavi.

2. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

3. Raja Narendra Nath.

4. Dr. B. S. Moonje.

that when the Frontier got their Reforms we would give to the 7% Hindus and the Sikhs much more than 15% that we got for the 7% Mussulmans in Madras, and we would even give to the 27% Hindus in Sind a weightage that would give them a larger minority than our own in the U.P.

"I pointed out that in the Punjab, our indebtedness to the Bunyas made us, until such time as we got out of their clutches, tools in their hands even though we were in a majority and therefore needed Reservation of Seats. As for Bengal it was absurd to talk of it as a minority province of the Hindus who needed protection as we needed it elsewhere, when we realised that all the Indian Bureaucracy, Indian Bar, Indian Journalism, and Indian Landlordship in Bengal was practically Hindu. The Mussulmans there were the depressed classes of Hindus, whose depression Islam had reduced, and it would be just as absurd to ask for protection for the landlords of Bengal against their tenants, as for the Brahmans and Bunyas to ask for protection from the depressed classes of Hindus, who were certainly in a majority compared to these powerful monopolistic castes. I believe Moonje and Narendra Nath are creating in English circles a very bad impression. But Mussulmans have not asserted themselves even with the quiet and effective advocacy of their cause. It is Shaffi<sup>1</sup> and Jinnah<sup>2</sup> who must do all the talking for us, and all the time in silence I repeat the beads saying '*Ya Hannano, Ya Mannano.*'

1. The late Sir Muhammad Shafi.

2. Mr. M. A. Jinnah.

"Yesterday we met for an hour and a half in the Prime Minister's room at the House of Commons and this was going to be Moonje's day (as the previous day was Narendra Nath's) when he began by explaining the Mahasabha position very pompously, commencing with Sapru's share in drawing up the Nehru Report which the Mahasabha accepted. Sapru immediately interrupted and explained how, just before the Nehru Report was signed, an agreement differing from the Report had been arrived at between the Hindu and Muslim leaders and broken within 24 hours by the Nehruites, and how Shoaib<sup>1</sup>, the only Muslim member who took part in the framing of the report, had to dissent because Reservation of Seats for the Muslim majority was refused even for 10 years, and how the whole thing fell through because the basic principle for refusing Reservation to the majority was that adult suffrage was presumed. To this I added that at least for 15 to 20 years adult suffrage would reduce our majority in the Punjab, and Bengal to a smaller minority, than even property and educational franchise could do because women also become adult and our adult women would not go even to purdah polling booths in the same proportion as women of other communities. Sitalvad<sup>2</sup> now helped the discussion by saying that before the Conference opened, Hindus and Mussulmans (*sic*) delegates had arrived at a settlement of all the 13 points and had provided agreed formulas for every one of the points on certain assumptions, one of which was that Joint

1. Mr. Shoaib Qureshi.

2. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad.

Electorates could be accepted by the Mussulmans. Difficulties have arisen about these assumptions and he suggested that we might arrive at agreed assumptions by discussion and thus revive the agreed formulas. Ramsay MacDonald accepted this but the Mahasabhaitees were reluctant and wanted to reopen each point in any case. Finally, it was decided that we should go on Saturday (tomorrow) the 13th to the Premier's official residence in the country, 'The Chequers', to discuss the general question of joint electorates and reservation of seats; but joint electorates with and without conditions, the conditions being open to discussion, and Reservation of Seats covering both Reservation with weightage and Reservation of either kind with or without liberty to contest other seats. I immediately put in my formula and though Ramsay MacDonald wanted to choke me off by saying 'I take it this cannot be agreed to by all', the Mussulmans when they declared what they wanted, insisted on the acceptance of my formula as a condition of Joint Electorate (*sic*). That is as far as we have gone. Let us see what happens tomorrow and thereafter.

"Please send one copy of this to Nawab Ismail Khan, Meerut, by the first post, another to Hayat<sup>1</sup> to Bhopal and the third to Jafri<sup>2</sup> at Delhi but not to the Khilafat Office where letters are censored. Nobody is to publish in the newspapers the details of the discussions in the Prime Minister's Committee of Conciliation, but they can write editorially with this knowledge at the back of their minds, and they

1. Mr. H. M. Hayat.

2. Mr. Mohamed Jafri.

can always contradict anything published which is contrary to the truth stated here.

"Your own copy you should send to Maulana Abdul Majid of Daryabad for his information, after showing it with (*sic*) Zulfiqar Ali<sup>1</sup> and Majid<sup>2</sup>. Next time I shall enclose another copy for him."

"I am sick of the pressure from the cowardly Mussulmans of the Punjab and Bengal who want both Reservation in accordance with the population and also separate electorates and do not tell us how we can retain weightage over the minority provinces. My own attitude towards these people is that since I am not their Delegate, but my own, I shall only give my own views according to my intelligence and my conscience....."

Joint or separate electorates can certainly have no meaning, as much as a communal or religious division of the country can have no meaning, if the **FUNDAMEN-** organic laws of a country are not pro-  
**TAL RIGHTS** perly defined and if the fundamental rights of the people are not adequately secured to them. At the moment in India, there is a confluence of three types of laws which constitutes the sum total on the basis of which the State is organised and the relationship between the individual and the State is regulated. There are the personal laws of the Hindus, the personal laws of the Muslims, while there is also the Statute law of the British in India,—all the three of which are intermeshed into a bewildering type of a legal system,

1. Elder brother of Maulana Mohamed Ali.

2. Mr. Majid Ali Khan, son-in-law of the Maulana Saheb.

which certainly breaks down when there is a conflict between two of the three, as had been the case times out of number with reference to certain cases as adjudicated by the highest Courts in India and even by the Privy Council. Recently an effort has been made to codify the British Statute Law in India and to a lesser extent the Hindu Law, but I am not aware of any attempt in this country to bring about a composite codification based upon what the Frenchman would perhaps call the *reglementation* of the Hindu and the Muslim law and tradition and the British Statute law, battering down contradictions wherever they exist (and they exist by the hundred) and throwing up the basic principles of a generic law which is applicable to every man and woman and child in this country. I do not know when such a codification and simplification of the Hindu and Muslim personal law and the British statute law (including the British common law) would be brought about in this country. But I am not prepared to wait for centuries or even decades to bring about such a consummation.

A similar method is to bring into existence a short document of organic laws of the State, both in respect of the rights of the citizen and the structure of society. I am aware of two attempts made by the major political parties in the land to bring about such a scheme of things into existence. The first attempt was made by the All-India National Congress at its session at Karachi in March 1931, when it passed its resolution on fundamental rights.

This resolution was amended by the All-India Congress Committee in the following August, and a further amended resolution was carried by the Congress at its annual session in 1933 and forms the creed of this premier political organisation of India even today. The resolution runs as follows:

"The Congress is of opinion that, to enable the masses to appreciate what '*Swaraj*', as conceived by the Congress, will mean to them, it is desirable to state the position of the Congress in a manner easily understood by them. In order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions. The Congress, therefore, declares that any constitution which may be agreed to on its behalf should provide, or enable the *Swaraj* Government to provide for the following:

"1. (i) Every citizen of India has the right of free expression of opinion, the right of free association and combination, and the right to assemble peacefully and without arms, for purposes not opposed to law or morality.

"(ii) Every citizen shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practise his religion, subject to public order and morality.

"(iii) The culture, language and script of the minorities and of the different linguistic areas shall be protected.

"(iv) All citizens are equal before the law, irrespective of religion, caste, creed or sex.

"(v) No disability attaches to any citizen, by reason of his or her religion, caste, creed or sex, in

regard to public employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling.

“(vi) All citizens have equal rights and duties in regard to wells, tanks, roads, schools and places of public resort, maintained out of state or local funds, or dedicated by private persons for the use of the general public.

“(vii) Every citizen has the right to keep and bear arms, in accordance with regulations and reservations made in that behalf.

“(viii) No person shall be deprived of his liberty nor shall his dwelling or property be entered, sequestered or confiscated, save in accordance with law.

“(ix) The State shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions.

“(x) The franchise shall be on the basis of universal adult suffrage.

“(xi) The State shall provide for free and compulsory primary education.

“(xii) The State shall confer no titles.

“(xiii) There shall be no capital punishment.

“(xiv) Every citizen is free to move throughout India and to stay and settle in any part thereof, to acquire property and to follow any trade or calling and to be treated equally with regard to legal prosecution or protection in all parts of India.

“2. (a) The organisation of economic life must conform to the principle of justice, to the end that it may secure a decent standard of living.

“(b) The State shall safeguard the interests of industrial workers and shall secure for them, by



suitable legislation and in other ways, a living wage, healthy conditions of work, limited hours of labour, suitable machinery for the settlement of disputes between employers and workmen, and protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness, and unemployment.

“(3) Labour to be freed from serfdom and conditions bordering on serfdom.

“(4) Protection of women workers and, specially, adequate provision for leave during maternity period.

“(5) Children of school-going age shall not be employed in mines and factories.

“(6) Peasants and workers shall have the right to form unions to protect their interests.

“(7) The system of land-tenure and revenue and rent shall be reformed and an equitable adjustment made of the burden on agricultural land, immediately giving relief to the smaller peasantry, by a substantial reduction of agricultural rent and revenue now paid by them and, in case of uneconomic holdings, exempting them from rent so long as necessary, with such relief as may be just and necessary to holders of small estates affected by such exemption or reduction in rent, and to the same end imposing a graded tax on net incomes from land above a reasonable minimum.

“(8) Death duties on a graduated scale shall be levied on property above a fixed minimum.

“(9) There shall be a drastic reduction of military expenditure so as to bring it down to at least one-half of the present scale.

“(10) Expenditure and salaries in civil departments shall be largely reduced. No servant of the State, other than specially employed experts and the like, shall be paid above a certain fixed figure, which should not ordinarily exceed Rs. 500 per month.

“(11) No duty shall be levied on salt manufactured in India.

“(12) The State shall protect indigenous cloth; and for this purpose pursue a policy of exclusion of foreign cloth and foreign yarn from the country and adopt such other measures as may be found necessary. The State shall also protect other indigenous industries, when necessary, against foreign competition.

“(13) Intoxicating drinks and drugs shall be totally prohibited, except for medicinal purposes.

“(14) Currency and exchange shall be regulated in the national interest.

“(15) The State shall own or control key industries and services, mineral resources, railways, waterways, shipping and other means of public transport.

“(16) Relief of agricultural indebtedness and control of usury—direct and indirect.

“(17) The State shall provide for the military training of citizens so as to organise a means of national defence apart from the regular military forces.”

In juxtaposition to the above Congress document of the proposed organic laws for a free India of the future, I must place the famous Fourteen Points of Mr. M. A. Jinnah, which represented at

one stage, at any rate, in our chequered political life, the basic creed of the All-India Muslim League. The following are these Fourteen Points :

"1. The future constitution to be federal, the residuary power being vested in the provinces.

"2. Uniform measure of autonomy to be granted to all provinces.

"3. Adequate and effective representation of minorities, without reducing the majority in any province to a minority or even equality.

"4. In the Central Legislature Muslim representation to be not less than one-third.

"5. Representation of communal groups by means of separate electorates, provided it shall be open to any community to abandon at any time separate electorates in favour of joint electorates.

"6. Any territorial redistribution necessary, not in any way to affect the Moslem majority in the Punjab, Bengal and the North-West Frontier Province.

"7. Full religious liberty to be granted, that is, liberty of belief, worship and observance; propaganda, association and education.

"8. No bill or Resolution to be passed in any legislature or elected body, if three-fourths of the members of any community in that body oppose it, on the ground that it would be injurious to the interests of that community.

"9. Sind to be separated from the province of Bombay.

"10. Reforms in the North-West Frontier

Province and Baluchistan to be on the same footing as in other provinces.

"11. Moslems to be given in the Constitution an adequate share in all the services of the State having due regard to the requirements of efficiency.

"12. The Constitution to embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Moslem culture.

"13. No Cabinet, Central or Provincial, to be formed without there being a proportion of at least one-third Moslem Ministers.

"14. No change to be made in the Constitution by the Central legislature except with the concurrence of the States constituting the Indian Federation."

The majority of these points of Mr. Jinnah have been conceded by the British Government and the Indian National Congress during the past several years but, like the pelican which feeds upon its young and thrives only on such feeding, Mr. Jinnah's appetite has apparently no limits set to it, and the result of the head-long plunge he had taken into religious politics in recent years was the Lahore Resolution of the All-India Muslim League of 1940, which demands *Pakistan* as the only possible solution of India's political problems, based upon a division of the country on the assumption that Hindus and Muslims are two separate nations.

This is not a place for a historical and factual examination of the progress of *Pakistan* in our midst as an idea, and the inevitable reaction against it among all sections of the Muslims themselves, which followed particularly in the wake of the

breakdown of the Gandhi-Jinnah talks in Bombay in September 1944. The inability and unwillingness of Mr. Jinnah to define *Pakistan*; the manner in which the problems of the non-Muslim minorities in the so-called *Pakistan* areas have been left out of the picture by Mr. Jinnah, particularly of the Sikhs in the Punjab; the perpetual problem of the 600 odd Indian States which apparently do not like and will not be allowed by the Paramount Power to choose sides between *Pakistan* and *Hindustan* and which, in any case, are severely left in the cold in Mr. Jinnah's public enunciation of the so-called *Pakistan* formula; and, finally, the fact that *Pakistan* and *Hindustan*, even if they come into existence, postulate and depend upon the presence in the midst of both of the foreign Power, whether it be in terms of an army of occupation or a neutral tribunal adjudicating disputes, as between the minority populations of both these States as against the majority community ruling them on the one hand, and as between *Hindustan* and *Pakistan* on the other—in view of all these and a host of other considerations, I for one do not believe, as a patriotic Indian, that *Pakistan* can ever become the working basis for the evolution of the Indian State in the future.

I do not wish to go over the ground covered by the considerations set forth in my other book *Nationalism and Self-Sufficiency*, to show up the futility of the *Pakistan* idea as the solvent of the troubles of the Muslims in India or the troubles of the country as a whole, but I do say that there is an

alternative to *Pakistan*, even as contained in the last testament of Maulana Mohamed Ali, quoted in an earlier section of this book, and this is the solution which is to be pursued by Hindus and Muslims alike in this country, if this country is to remain an integral whole, as every ardent patriot wishes to see it remain an integral whole, and if we as a people are to find our proper place in the future delimitation of world politics on the basis of unity and strength.

For years past efforts have been made in this country to propagate the idea of a Constituent Assembly as the sovereign constitution-making body for the people. Comrade M. N. Roy, even as **CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY** far back as 1928, suggested it to the Congress as an alternative to the Simon Commission, which was just then careering through its course and investigation of the possibilities of political settlement in India, and wrote its report, subsequently, which formed—the basis of the Constitution Act of 1935. The Swaraj Party of the Congress in 1934 sponsored the following resolution: "Whereas this conference is of the opinion that the proposals of His Majesty's Government for a new constitution for the Government of India, contained in the White Paper, are considered as a whole not only the negation of the National Demand made by Mahatma Gandhi on behalf of the Congress at the Second Round Table Conference, but are calculated to perpetuate the political subjection and economic exploitation of India's people, this Conference resolves that the Swaraj Party should take all the

necessary steps to secure the rejection of these proposals by the country. This Conference claims for India, in common with other nations, the right of self-determination, and is of the opinion that the only method of applying that principle is to convene a Constituent Assembly represented by all sections of Indian people to frame an acceptable constitution.

"This Conference is further of the opinion that the consideration of the acceptance or the rejection of the mode and proportion of representation as contained in the Communal Award is premature at this stage. The time for considering the same will arrive when a Constituent Assembly is convened."

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, than whom no one in this country was more responsible for propagating this idea of a Constituent Assembly, declared in one place that "if the Muslim elected representatives for this Constituent Assembly adhere to certain communal demands, I shall press for their acceptance. Much as I dislike communalism, I realise that it does not disappear by suppression, but by a removal of the feeling of fear or by a diversion of interests. We should, therefore, remove this fear complex and make the Muslim masses realise that they can have any protection that they really desire. I feel that this realisation will go a long way in toning down the feeling of communalism." After the abolition of the Congress Swaraj Party and after its acceptance of a parliamentary programme under the Constitution Act of 1935, the Congress at its session at Faizpur on December 28, 1936, passed the famous Constituent Assembly Resolution which

runs as follows: "The Congress reiterates its entire rejection of the Government of India Act, 1935, and the Constitution that has been imposed on India against the declared will of the people of the country. In the opinion of the Congress any co-operation with this constitution is a betrayal of India's struggle for freedom and a strengthening of the hold of British Imperialism, and a further exploitation of the Indian masses who have already been reduced to direst poverty under Imperialist domination. The Congress, therefore, repeats its resolve not to submit to this Constitution or to co-operate with it, but to combat it, both inside and outside the legislatures, so as to end it. The Congress does not and will not recognise the right of any external power or authority to dictate the political and economic structure of India and every such attempt will be met by organised and uncompromising opposition of the Indian people. The Indian people can only recognise a constitutional structure which has been framed by them and which is based on the independence of India as a nation and which allows them full scope for development according to their needs and desires.

"The Congress stands for a genuine democratic State in India where political power has been transferred to the people as a whole and the government is under their effective control. Such a State can only come into existence through a Constituent Assembly, elected by adult suffrage and having the power to determine finally the constitution of the country....."



Two other documents of vital public interest must be quoted here. The one is the resolution sponsored and passed unanimously in all the Provincial legislatures where Congress had majorities and formed ministries after the inauguration of the Provincial Autonomy in 1937: "This Assembly is of the opinion that the Government of India Act, 1935, in no way represents the will of the nation and is wholly unsatisfactory as it has been designed to perpetuate the subjection of the people of India. The assembly demands that this should be repealed and replaced by a Constitution for a free India framed by a Constituent Assembly, elected on the basis of adult franchise, which allows the Indian people full scope for development according to their needs and desires."

Finally, the All-India Congress Committee on September 14, 1939, passed the following resolution, setting forth in a fundamental manner the demand of the people of this country for a machinery which is capable of evolving a Constitution which will serve as a basis of a treaty between India on the one hand and Britain on the other.

"But there is an inherent and ineradicable conflict between democracy for India or elsewhere, and Imperialism and Fascism. If Great Britain fights for the maintenance and extension of democracy, then she must necessarily end Imperialism in her own possessions and establish full democracy in India, and the Indian people must have the right of self-determination by framing their own Constitution through a Constituent Assembly without external

interference and must guide their own policy. A free democratic India will gladly associate herself with other free nations for mutual defence against aggression and for economic co-operation. We will work for the establishment of a real world order based on freedom and democracy, utilising the world's knowledge and resources for the progress and advancement of humanity."

Many have been the traducers of the Constituent Assembly idea as developed during the past two decades by the major political body of the country. The "deliverance day" observed by Mr. Jinnah and his principal adherents when Congress resigned office, already referred to in an earlier section of this book, is one of the many symbols of the put-up shows of opposition to the Constituent Assembly, and it is not surprising that the man who declared that India is unfit for democracy had stage-managed these so-called demonstrations for the benefit of His Majesty's Government. The Cripps' Offer pledged His Majesty's Government to the following: "Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities steps shall be taken to set up in India, in the manner described hereafter, an elected body charged with the task of framing a new Constitution for India. Provision shall be made, as set out below, for participation of Indian States in the Constitution making body." I need not detain myself here to examine the provisions of the Cripps' Offer and show the manner in which Britain sought to dissemble Indian leadership and ultimately contrived to bring about the failure of the Cripps' negotiations, apart from show-

ing that the Cripps' Offer, within the meaning of the two clauses quoted above, definitely contains the ingredients of a Constituent Assembly, by whatever name such an Assembly is to be called today or tomorrow.

In order to show that even Sir Stafford Cripps was only indulging in the cheap clap-trap of a politician to mislead Indian leaders (which unfortunately he failed to do, as illustrated by the failure of his Mission and his ignominious departure from this country in 1942), I must quote a passage from the diary I have kept of the press conferences given by Sir Stafford Cripps in 1942, at which I was responsible for getting elucidation of certain very vital points, which ultimately led to the break-up of his negotiations with Indian leaders. Concerning the Constituent Assembly, this is what I wrote:\*

"In what he called the 'cross examination' of the statement which we were asked to make, Sir Stafford Cripps came out triumphant, and even though his forensic eloquence and brilliance sought to cover up his obvious desire to give us information, a very valuable insight into his brain cap is obtained by us. For example, I asked him the following question: 'Supposing Indian leaders contrive to offer you a formula or a series of proposals which are conceivably better than those you have brought to this country, will His Majesty's Government accept them?' The answer to this question was an emphatic 'No'. Sir Stafford, from this enunciation of

\*See my weekly paper *Commerce & Industry*, March 25, 1942, Vol. XVII, No. 12, p. 5.

his position, means that the British Parliament had not divested itself of its responsibility for the governance of this country and that what the British War Cabinet has arranged for India as a final and just settlement, to quote the words of the British Premier, must be accepted or (God forbid) rejected by this country. In any case, it would appear that the firmness with which Britain is approaching India these days in her conciliating gesture towards us, means that either we accept the formula in good faith or we would be faced with a situation in which there would not be any other alternative to a settlement enforced upon us from above !”

From whatever angle one might approach the problem of India's freedom, the need for the creation of a sovereign national constitution-making body becomes imperative. The simple reason for such insistence necessarily is the fact that we in this country cannot get our freedom enlarged without entering into a covenant with the people of Britain in the fullness of time. Quite a good number of proposals for the drafting of the future Constitution of India has recently taken the field. There is Comrade Roy's scheme for a Bill of Succession transferring sovereignty from Britain to India, supported by certain organic laws which are to regulate the relationship between citizen and citizen and the citizen and the State. The Hindu Mahasabha has drafted a constitution of its own. Sir Sultan Ahmed has prepared yet another scheme, in which the treaty making idea, as between India and Britain,

finds its importance properly emphasised. As far as I am aware, Mr. Jinnah's position is far from satisfactory with regard to the future evolution of the Constitution for India, even if it be of the variety shrouded in the *Pakistan* idea. I do not wish to be ungenerous to Mr. Jinnah, but I must say that an analysis of all his utterances yields only one result, *viz.*, that he believes in the bequest by Britain of his *Pakistan* and depends upon the British power in India for the preservation of that *Pakistan*, if and when he receives it through the largesse of the British people. Otherwise, Mr. Jinnah would certainly have asked for a Constituent Assembly even within the meaning of the limited implications of his *Pakistan* demand.

I have referred earlier to Mr. Jinnah's *volte face* about democracy in India and to his escapist statement that *Pakistan* will be democratically organised. But there is no question that Mr. Jinnah has a mortal fear of the ballot box even for his *Pakistan* areas and seeks, with reference to the Punjab, to escape through the horns of a dilemma by calling the Sikhs a sub-nationality and by assuring them that under *Pakistan* their rights would be properly safeguarded. A re-counting of the heads in Bengal, coupled with a re-shuffling of the boundaries to the west might almost destroy *Pakistan* in its principal aspects in the eastern territories, and Mr. Jinnah would never agree to the counting of the heads either in *Pakistan* or outside *Pakistan*, but simply clings only to *Pakistan* as he understands it and as the country does not as yet understand it. The

argument here is that Mr. Jinnah cannot get away from a counting of the heads, even within the meaning of his so-called *Pakistan* formula, for the simple reason that he cannot contract out of India as we know it now on the basis of the argument that the Muslims are a separate nation, and still deny to millions of people in the so-called *Pakistan* areas who are not Muslims, (including what Mr. Jinnah called the sub-nation of the Sikhs in the Punjab) their co-equal right to contract out, if such a course is deemed suitable to their needs. Apart from the smaller problem of minorities inside *Pakistan* areas, there is always the major question of the relation of the so-called *Pakistan* areas with the rest of India, and of *Pakistan* and non-*Pakistan* India on the one hand and Britain on the other. With the result, that which ever way one looks, there is no escape from something like a Constituent Assembly based upon adult suffrage which is ultimately to grapple with the manifold problems of this county.

This does not mean that in the light of the communal controversies of the past ten years in particular, *i.e.*, ever since the Lucknow session of the All-India Muslim League, there would not be readiness on the part of the so-called major community in the country to afford every reasonable facility for the Muslim and other minorities in India to have their proper weightage in the Constitution-making body, or for that matter in the Constitution itself.

The Hindu-Muslim problem in India these days is

a problem of psychology finding support in an unnatural ally, viz., the ruling power, whose credo is *divide et impera*. I believe that the so-called major community in India would do everything in its power to remove the fears of the minorities by agreeing to such weightage as is deemed necessary by them, and as is practicable in terms of a political reconstruction which must be stable, sovereign and acceptable to all the communities in the country and to the outside world. The late Maulana Mohamed Ali's formula of conditional mixed electorates, with such suitable adjustments as are found necessary on the basis of our political experience of the past fifteen years, is something which can be taken in hand as the basic foundation for the structure of political India of the future. The fundamental demand of Mr. Jinnah, incorporated in his famous Fourteen Points, is the essential recognition that a federal polity for India must be sustained by fully autonomous federating units, which must find vested in themselves the residual powers necessary for the working of a State, subject to certain reservations concerning the federal centre. Mr. Jinnah has gone back upon these demands and, as I have said earlier, pelican-wise is unable to find his appetite for sovereignty on a communal-religious basis unquenched.

Mr. Jinnah would have his sovereignty for his federating units, even on the basis of certain alterations to the existing territorial divisions of the country, if only by indulging in such a process Mr. Jinnah would have the nucleus of his *Pakistan* States to the west and east of the country. But

there must be that assurance—and it is a vital assurance—that, in the light of the grand *regime* of demographic dispersion of population over the length and breadth of the country, which keeps the Hindu and the Muslim cheek by jowl and actually inseparable for all time, separate electorates should never be allowed to rear their heads once again in a free India. Mr. Jinnah would have his weightage at the centre *i.e.* in the Central Executive and might easily become the first premier of India in terms of the sporting offer of Mr. C. Rajagopalachari. Mr. Jinnah would certainly have his composite ministries, in which members of other political parties, whether in majority or minority provinces or even with reference to the federal centre, on a basis of understanding and goodwill, but there is no question that India can ever become free if the separate electorates system, meaning thereby the vivisection of India into religious and communal groups, is to continue.

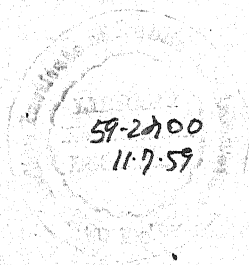
The Sapru Committee is still to release its report, and it is not for me to say what recommendations that distinguished body of public men and constitutional experts will recommend. But it is clear that whatever is the shape and hue of the Constitution for the country, the secularisation of the State is a vital and pressing necessity. There is no quarrel in India between man and man on the ground that one has a particular mode of life and living and even religion, which is different from that of his fellows. Indeed, India is the emporium of religions, and I believe there is no other country in the world where one finds such a complexity of religious patterns as



is to be found in our midst. No one by a stroke of the pen can hope to wipe out these complexities, for the simple reason that religion is an equation between man and his Maker, and will be clung to with all the tenacity of purpose which the human breast can summon to its assistance. As a matter of fact, there is no need for the wiping out of these complexities of religion, also for another simple reason that without his intimate approach to his Maker man would suddenly be deprived of the salt of life, and life itself would become meaningless for him. But the projection of man's religion, from out of the sphere of his relationship with his Maker into the more mundane things, has failed right through the historic period and is bound to lead today and tomorrow to a catastrophe whose magnitude cannot be comprehended fully by a citizen of the State.

Man belongs to the Earth and the Earth belongs to man, and as long as these fundamental facts remain, there cannot be a better religion for man than the worship of the Earth which feeds him and which is fed by him for all time. We in this country have still to learn the true meaning of patriotism, and we can only learn the true meaning of patriotism if we cling to the Earth with a tenacity of purpose and a secular mode of approach which far transcends the verities of life demanded by institutional religion. Everywhere in the world institutional religion is crumbling into the dust, and I do not see any reason why it should be supported or revived in our midst today or tomorrow. The

secularisation of the polity of the State has been accepted as a vital necessity even by the successors to the Calíphs, and the moral of the past three decades of Turkish history must necessarily convince us of the need for a similar secular approach to the evolution of a polity and a State in this country which is to endure the test of time. This is an objective which every patriot in this land must reach, with a solemn covenant between himself and his fellows that they would not falter until they reach the goal. I again repeat what I have said at the beginning of this critique: patriotism without a country is worse than slavery with one, and patriotism which is dominated by religion is useless tinsel.



## THE LAST POLITICAL TESTAMENT OF THE LATE MAULANA MOHAMED ALI

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The following seven pages represent photostat reproduction of portions of the letter written by the late Maulana Mohamed Ali on the vital problem of India's constitutional and political battle with Britain.

The late Maulana Saheb declared with tragic prophesy in the First Round Table Conference: "I want to go back to my country, if I can go back with the substance of freedom in my hand. Otherwise, I will not go back to a slave country. I would even prefer to die in a foreign country, so long as it is a free country, and if you do not give us freedom in India, you will have to give me a grave here." Britain gave him his grave, though his remains were ultimately sent to Jerusalem, and India has not, despite all these fifteen years of struggle, achieved her freedom.

The letter was dated Hyde Park Hotel, Knightsbridge, London, S. W. 1., December 12, 1930, and addressed to his brother-in-law, the late Moazzam Ali Khan, B. A. (Oxon), Bar-at-law, for circulation among his co-workers and friends, and indicates the manner in which even Ramsay MacDonald scotched his formula of "conditional mixed electorates", which even today offers the solution to the problems of India.

I am obliged for the original of the letter to my friend Mr. Mohamed Jafri, who was the assistant editor of the Maulana Saheb's Urdu daily '*Hamdard*' before it ceased publication some time before the First Round Table Conference, and to whom the Maulana Saheb makes a reference at page 9 of his original letter, i.e., on the last page of this photostat reproduction.

I have omitted the earlier and latter portions of the letter, for they relate to purely personal or domestic matters.

Now I come to the work. The Federal Structure Committee which is the most important and fundamental, and the Provincial Autonomy Committee the importance of which was also undoubted, have had to slow down their work this week because it was impossible to go on without settling the Hindu-Muslim quarrel. ~~Every week this~~ was bound to crop up and so the Prime Minister collected together one afternoon in the Committee Room a few Hindus and a few Mussulmans and began to press for a settlement among the delegates of the two communities. Jayakar promptly suggested that the Prime Minister should become the arbitrator. This is the kind of thing that those people have been doing all along. They insist on their dirty linen being washed before others. They know well enough that by proposing someone as arbitrator they flatter his vanity and might succeed in making him a partisan and the idea of referring the matter to the League of Nations had evidently a good foundation and was their own. Jinnah promptly intervened and said arbitration would make the Prime Minister very invidious and naturally the Prime Minister agreed. The Mussulmans, however, suggested that he could try for a settlement as ~~which he agreed to~~ <sup>which he agreed to</sup> do so Hindus and Mussulmans selected some 10 representatives each including the three ~~whom~~ <sup>the Hindus</sup> and the Liberals.

When the Mussulmans got to decide what should be their terms the great





minority community while an ordinary joint electorate leaves the minority community at the tender mercy of the majority community while the separate electorate encourages communal fanaticism and discourages Nationalism.

It is all very well where I like the Punjab and Bengal, the Frontier and Sind, ~~where~~ we are in a majority to have separate electorates. But separate electorates in provinces where we are in a minority, although they make it certain that we cannot in some of our real representatives whom we cannot return in the ordinary joint electorates, make it also certain that ~~the~~ majority community must also return ~~undesirable~~ candidates like our own who are combative rather than conciliatory and since it is not a third person who is the judge that must decide which advocate has ~~the~~ <sup>by a last count</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>out of her 100</sup> right case, but the two advocates themselves by voting: the party that ~~the same~~ <sup>advocate</sup> wins, and the party with few advocates loses. ~~It is to be~~

~~the same~~ <sup>the same</sup> well, with the exception of Indrani who is a Government man out and out, they will come round and even Patel had said since the Hindus of Bengal would never accept this there is no harm in our willingness to have this formula in a joint electorate so as to throw the blame of refusal on the Hindus instead of taking it on ourselves. We could only disperse after 10 o'clock and you can imagine the condition of my heart and mind after so much excitement and work.

Next day we went to 10, Downing Street and much gas was let out for two hours with hardly any result except Sapru's uncharacteristic attack on the coat of those who made cheap appeals in the name of Nationalism. I pointed out in reply to Harindranath who made no less than a dozen speeches along with Moonje who must have made 9 or 10, that when Hindus talk of ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> minority in the Punjab they did not make it clear to the Prime Minister that while their majorities were from about 75% in Assam to 95% in C.P., our majorities were only 55 and 56 per cent in Bengal and Punjab where we ~~cannot~~ <sup>can let</sup> afford to give anybody any weightage, but when the Frontier got their



reform we would give to the 7% Hindus and the Sikhs much more than 15% that we got for the 7% Mussulmans in Madras and we would even give to the 27% Hindus in Sind a weightage that would give them a larger minority than our own in the U.P.

I pointed out that in the Punjab, our indebtedness to the Buntys made us, until such time as we got out of their clutches, tools in their hands even though we were in a majority and therefore needed Reservation of Seats. As for Bengal it was absurd to talk of it as a minority province of the Hindus who needed protection as we needed it elsewhere when we realized that all the Indian Bureaucrats, Indian Bar, Indian Journalists and Indian Landlordship was practically Hindu. The Mussulmans there were the depressed classes of Hindus whose depression, Islam had removed and it would be just as absurd to ask for protection for the landlords of Bengalis against their tenants as for the Brahmins and Buntys to ask for protection from the depressed classes of Hindus who were certainly in a majority compared to these powerful monopolistic castes. I believe Moulvi and Mulla are creating in English circles a very bad impression. But Mussulmans have not asserted themselves even with the quiet and effective advocacy of their cause. It is Shafi and Jinnah who must do all the talking for us and all the time in silence I ~~heard~~ <sup>heard</sup> the beads saying "Ya Mamano, Ya Mamano!!"

Yesterday we met for an hour and a half in the Prime Minister's room at the House of Commons and this was going to be Moulvi's day which he began by explaining the Mahasabha position very pompously, commencing with Sapru's share in drawing up the Nehru Report which the Mahasabha accepted. Sapru immediately interrupted and explained how just before the Nehru Report was signed, an agreement <sup>deferring from the report</sup> had been arrived at between the Hindu and Muslim leaders and broken within 24 hours by the Nehruites, and how Shuib, the only Muslim member who took part in the framing of the report, had to dissent because reservation of seats for the Muslim majority was



refused even for 10 years, and how the whole thing fell through because the basic principle <sup>for us</sup> ~~was~~ Reservation <sup>is</sup> the majority was that adult suffrage was presumed. To this I added that at least for 15 to 20 years adult suffrage would reduce our majority in the Punjab, and Bengal to a smaller minority than even property and educational franchise could do because women also became adult and our adult women would not go even to purdah polling booths in the same proportion as <sup>was</sup> ~~in~~ other communities. Sitalvad now helped the discussion by saying that before the conference opened, Hindus and Mussulmans had arrived at a settlement of all the 13 points and had provided agreed formulas for every one of the points on certain assumptions, one of which was that Joint Electorates could be accepted by the Mussulmans. Difficulties have arisen about these assumptions and he suggested that <sup>we</sup> ~~we~~ <sup>might</sup> ~~we~~ arrive at agreed assumptions by discussion and thus revise the agreed formulas. Ramsay MacDonald accepted this but the Mahasabhis were reluctant and wanted to reopen each point in any case. Finally it was decided that we should go on Saturday (tomorrow) the 13th to the Premier's official residence "The Chaguers" to discuss the general question of joint electorates and reservation of seats; but joint electorates with or without conditions, the conditions being open to discussion and reservation of seats covering both Reservation in accordance with proportion of population and Reservation with weightage and Reservation of either with or without liberty to contest other seats. I immediately put in my formula and though Ramsay MacDonald wanted to strike me off by saying "I take it this is cannot be agreed to by all", the Mussulmans when they declared what they wanted, insisted on the acceptance of my formula as a condition of Joint Electorate. That is as far as we have gone. Let us see what happens tomorrow and thereafter.

Please send one copy of this to Nawab Ismail Khan, Meerut, by the first post, another to Muzet to Bhawal and the third to Jinnah at Delhi. But not to the Khilafat office where the letters are consigned. Nobody is to publish in the newspapers the details of the discussion in the Prime Minister's Committee of Conciliation but they can write editorially with this knowledge at the back of their minds, and they can always contradict anything published which is contrary to the truth stated here.

Your own copy you can send to Maulana Abdul Malik of Daryabad for his information. Next time I shall enclose another copy for him.

I am sick of the pressure from the cowardly Mussulmans and of the Punjab and Bengal who want both Reservation in accordance with the population and also separate electorates and do not tell us how we can retain weightage over the minority provinces. All that they want is that since I am not their Delegate but my own, I shall only give my own views according to my intelligence and my conscience.